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in the ebullience
of his power and
in the fatal grip

May 1968, 75 cents

THE *Atlantic*

of an irrelevant experience, wanted to strike
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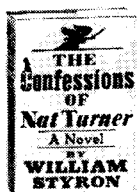
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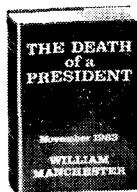
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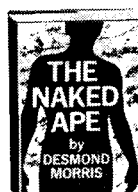
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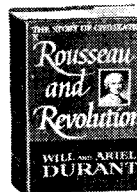
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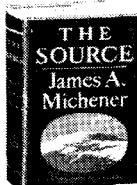
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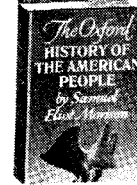
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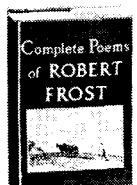
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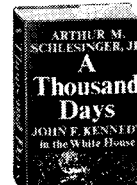
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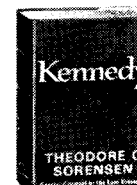
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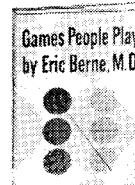
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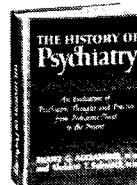
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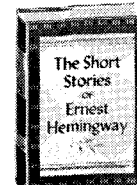
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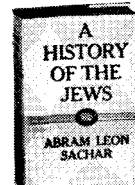
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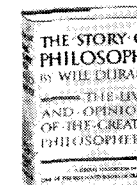
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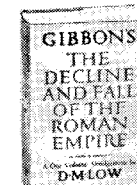
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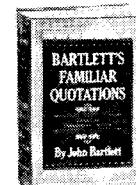
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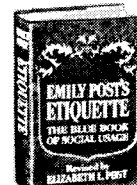
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Editor in Chief

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ADVERTISING: *Harper-Atlantic Sales, Inc., 535 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y., 10017. Tel. 212-986-3344*
1 YEAR \$8.50, 2 YEARS \$16.00, 3 YEARS \$23.00 in the UNITED STATES, its possessions, and CANADA; \$9.00
a year elsewhere.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, May, 1968, Vol. 221, No. 5. Published monthly at The Rumford Press, 10 Ferry St., Concord, N.H., 03302. Editorial and business offices, 8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass., 02116. Second-class postage paid at Concord, N.H. Printed in the U.S.A. Copyright © 1968, by The Atlantic Monthly Company. This issue published in national and special editions. All rights, including translation into other languages, reserved by the publisher in the United States, Great Britain, Mexico, and all countries participating in the International Copyright Convention and the Pan American Copyright Convention. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage.
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ANSWER: Smart wife. Take the time to get facts before making up your mind. Ask a member firm broker about the company's earnings, dividends, position in its industry. Generally

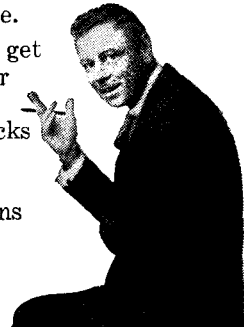
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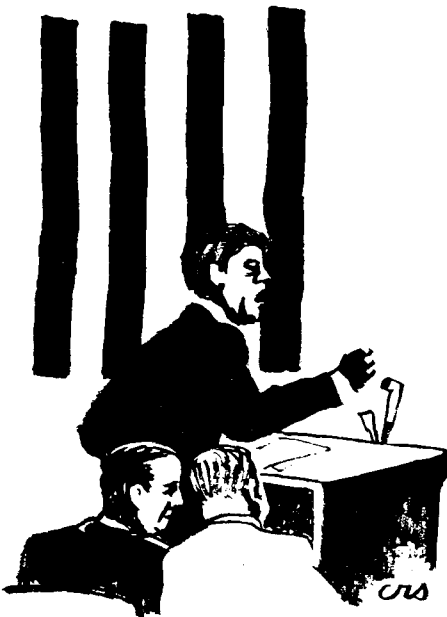
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reports

Washington



"You are as aware as we are that the shift of opinion in this country is in the wrong direction."

— Senator Karl Mundt (R., S. Dak.) to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, March 12, 1968

To most people distressed about the course of American policy in Vietnam since 1964, it had seemed sadly but inescapably true that Lyndon Johnson, offering tributes to the magnitude and virtues of "American strength" at a military base, did after all speak for America.

This would probably have been an inaccurate reading of the electorate weeks before the New Hampshire primary, and months before LBJ's decision not to seek re-election. A band of states stretching across the Northwest and North Central boundaries of the republic has sent to the United States Senate

a collection of supporters of the late Great Society who also make up the rank and file (and some of the leadership) of the Senate's anti-war bloc. Reading from west to east and north to south, a list of these Westerners and Midwesterners would run like this: Gruening of Alaska, Morse and Hatfield of Oregon, Church of Idaho, Mansfield and Metcalf of Montana, Burdick of North Dakota, McGovern of South Dakota, McCarthy of Minnesota, Nelson of Wisconsin, Hartke of Indiana, Young of Ohio. Five of them are up for re-election this year: Gruening, Morse, Church, McGovern, and Nelson, Democrats all. Also up are Democrats Fulbright of Arkansas and Clark of Pennsylvania, who would appear on any master list of the Senate's war critics. Republican Morton of Kentucky is retiring.

Senate rebels

Six months ago, none of the five Western and Midwestern senators' prospects were bright. The primaries, and the political upheaval they wrought, have told their story of what has happened to support for the war since the Tet offensive. A less publicized version of the same story is indicated by the fact that the anti-war senatorial candidates in the West and Midwest are for the first time optimistic about their chances at the polls. Thus, in part, the alarm in the view expressed by Karl Mundt (stalwart conservative) to Dean Rusk.

What and whom do these anti-war senators represent in 1968? The question is complicated by geography, history, and the Administration, which would have you believe that Morse et al. are just the dressed-up ghosts of the pre-war isolationists,

popular with the liberal intellectuals who understand fashion but not power, soft on Mao as others were blind to Hitler.

In fact, these men do represent the region which from William Jennings Bryan's day to World War II sent to Washington the most progressive, independent, and controversial politicians of the era. Much of the economic regulation and social legislation of Wilson's and FDR's Administrations was first offered in Congress by an avant-garde of men like the Robert La Follettes, father and son, of Wisconsin, William Borah of Idaho, Burton Wheeler of Montana, and George Norris of Nebraska. Some of them — especially Wheeler, Borah, and Gerald Nye of North Dakota — led the fight against American entry into World War II, and it is indeed to the blindness of their isolationism that the President and others have tried to link what they call the "new isolationism" of the Senate doves.

There are in fact as many ambiguities in the alleged "isolationism" of Frank Church of Idaho or Wayne Morse of Oregon as there are in the "internationalism" of Lyndon Johnson. These ambiguities are as important as those which surface in public opinion polls depending on how the question is put: this whopping percentage against American troop commitments to Vietnam or in favor of a phase-out is followed by that whopping percentage in favor of more aggressive prosecution of the war.

The West and the war

How, for example, does one explain the case of George McGovern in South Dakota? At forty-five, he has been a history professor, a congressman, and director of the Food

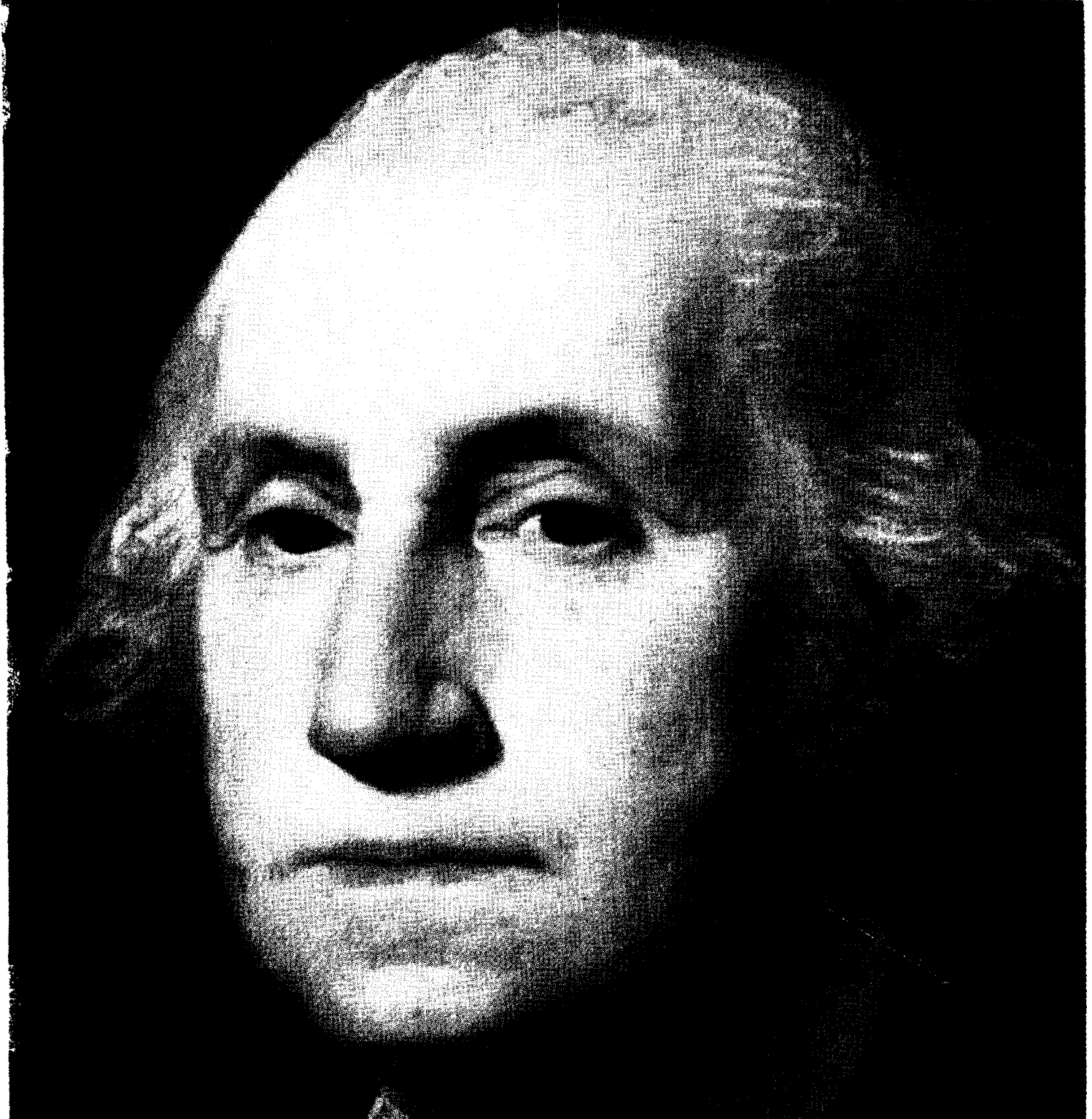
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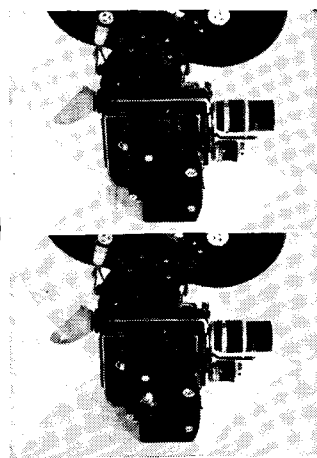
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Washington

for Peace Program under Kennedy. He is a New Frontier and Great Society liberal, and with Fulbright, Morse, Gruening, and Nelson he is one of the most unqualifiedly anti-war men in the Senate. He was elected by a fraction of a percentage in 1962 in a state which is registered Republican by two to one. Nixon easily carried it in 1960, though Johnson took it four years ago. In February, according to the reliable South Dakota poll, the only Republican the President could have beaten was Reagan. Rockefeller would have carried the state against LBJ, 56 to 25 percent; Nixon would have carried it with 51 percent to Johnson's 35. But McGovern would poll 70 percent against 27 percent for his nearest Republican opponent. Given the state's Republicanism, this can only mean that whatever South Dakota Republicans think of Rockefeller, Nixon, or Reagan, many of them like dove McGovern.

Doubting center

Says McGovern, "It's hard to define what people think about the war — they would like not to think about it at all. There's no question but that the Tet offensive shocked a number of people who have gone along with the Administration, sharing its optimism and suppressing doubts. People will come up to me to commend my stand and say nothing more specific than, 'Well, this Vietnam thing, I don't know . . . I think it's good you're standing up, asking questions, having it out. I don't trust this Johnson.' " Translation, according to McGovern: if the war gets bigger, these voters of the "doubting center" will probably go along with escalation, but they will want out all the more. They are more inclined than ever to doubt the possibility of "victory." They will tolerate and listen to the anti-war senators, and perhaps elect them as a measure of their doubts. They have been susceptible to appeals for escalation of the air war. "Bombing," says McGovern, ex-war-time bomber pilot, "appeals to people. It's the way to make war without shedding our blood."

All of these senators get around their states; some, like Gruening and Church, for a week or two at a time; others, like Morse, almost

every weekend. Church, McGovern, and Nelson are particularly encouraged by smaller meetings at which they can take questions and experiment with various ways of talking about the war. They agree on the effectiveness of two anti-war approaches. One is to try to split the war-hawk vote apart by showing that escalation means not just "easy" bombing but more American ground troops in Asia. Gaylord Nelson, fifty-one, who served two terms as governor of Wisconsin and now seeks his second Senate term, is a political sophisticate who argues the anti-war position more with irony than with appeals to morality. "The confrontation won't be about whether one is for or against the war," he says. "Everyone's 'against' it. It will come on more immediate points. A lot of Republicans will argue for giving the military free rein. I'd say in response, 'Does my opponent favor sending *another* hundred thousand troops to Vietnam? And *another*? Because that's what military escalation means.' "

"Yellow peril" and dominoes

The second anti-war tactic these men employ is more daring. It tries to counter the most basic brand of positive support for Administration war policy. The lowest common denominator of support for the Administration, the anti-war senators agree, has been a kind of vulgarized domino theory. Each has encountered constituents who dislike the President's personality, feel the war is a disaster, wasteful, ugly, dangerous, even unwinnable. These voters think that we are overcommitted; are failing to attain promised goals; never should have gotten in; ought to find a way out. Nonetheless, say these citizens, we are standing against a potential flood of Chinese Communist aggression across Asia. Whatever the validity and refinements of the domino theory in State Department discourse, the vulgarized view of the nature of the confrontation translates out in unsubtle terms, with the help of inflammatory statements from the President and other politicians on down the line. Fact thus mixes with speculation and hokum. The Red Chinese came into Korea against us. Viet Cong or Pekingese, the enemy is "Asian Communism." "We've got what they want and they're coming after us." (LBJ, 1966)

The senators have devised rather simple analogies to dislodge the equally simplified canons of "yellow peril" rhetoric. Each is in effect arguing a reverse of the domino theory. As Gaylord Nelson puts it, "The Chinese are not there now, but to send a million men to fight in the very border areas of China is certainly the best way to bring the Chinese in." Nelson's analogy goes like this: "I say to my audiences, 'What Chinese? Where are they? In twenty years of fighting there haven't been any Chinese in Vietnam, and it's only our luck and their weakness that that's so. Try thinking about it the other way round. Suppose Mexico were split in two and a Communist South Mexico were at war with a pro-American North Mexico. Why, any President of the United States who wasn't throwing American power down there would be impeached!'" Church suggests that we are looking for trouble from China rather than meeting a threat, and asks his constituents to "imagine for a moment that we were in China's place, and that Chinese Communist power positions were poised in a ring around the U.S. from Cuba through Mexico to Alaska." McGovern speaks of the conflict as "basically a civil war between two groups of Vietnamese which only they can resolve — much as we once fought and resolved a civil war between the North and South in our country. If the big world powers of a hundred years ago had come over here and chosen up sides and tried to settle it for us, it would have been the worst thing that could have happened to us."

"Arsenal diplomacy"

Morse and Gruening have been as critical of foreign aid as the most fossilized Republican, and increasingly, Frank Church has joined them. In theory, this ought to substantiate the charge against them of "new isolationism." Even George McGovern, more inclined to vote for foreign aid, suggests that occasionally anti-war liberals vote against aid as a gesture toward right-wing opinion in their states. They are hardly alone. Opposition to foreign aid has crystallized as a vote of no confidence in American foreign policy in more general terms. Frank Church, for example, speaks of America's "arsenal diplomacy." The conservative critics of the aid

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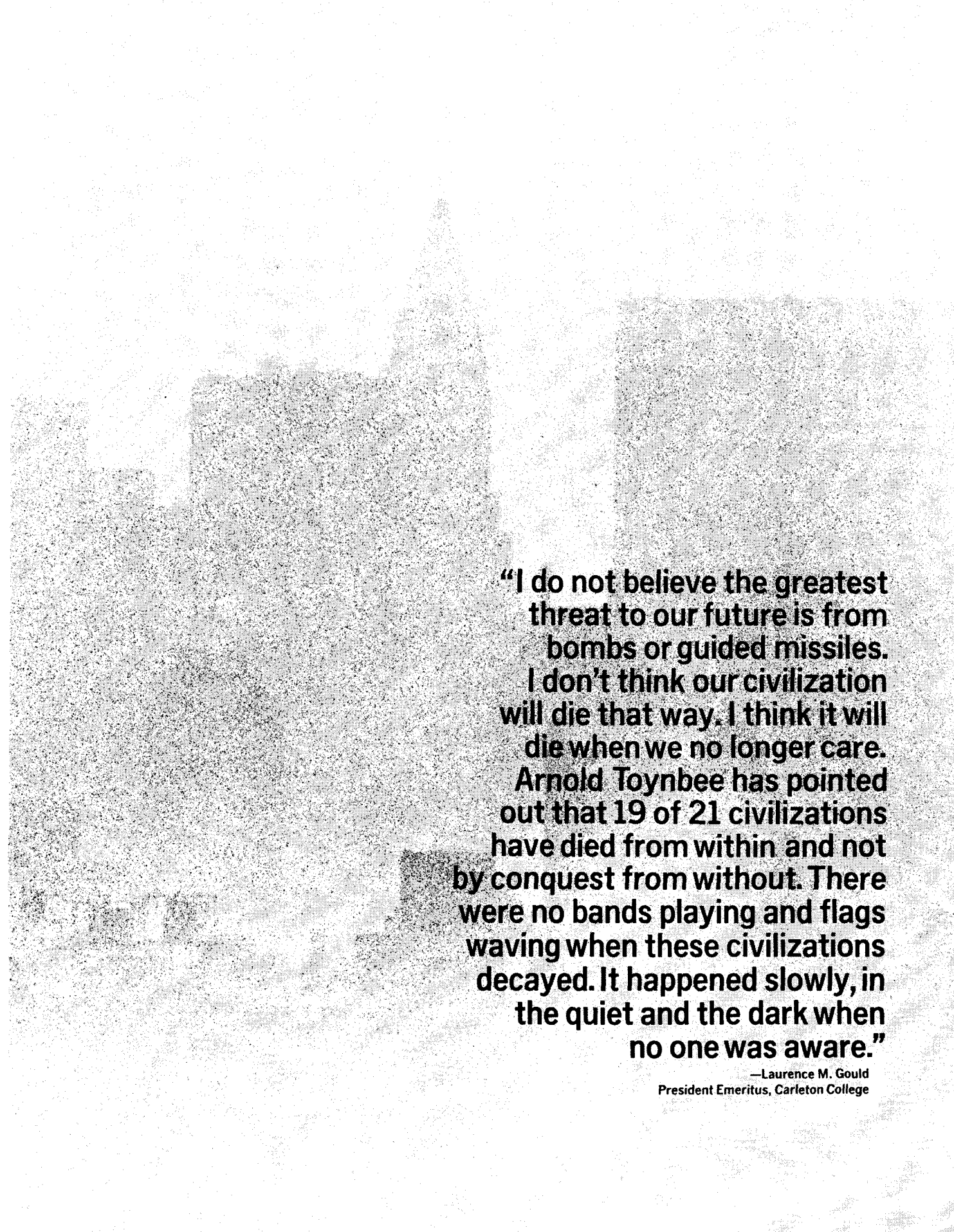
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"I do not believe the greatest threat to our future is from bombs or guided missiles. I don't think our civilization will die that way. I think it will die when we no longer care. Arnold Toynbee has pointed out that 19 of 21 civilizations have died from within and not by conquest from without. There were no bands playing and flags waving when these civilizations decayed. It happened slowly, in the quiet and the dark when no one was aware."

**—Laurence M. Gould
President Emeritus, Carleton College**

What can business and industry do?

The job of rehabilitating our cities, of making them fit for all to live in, must rest primarily with government. But it's a job too big for government alone.

It's everybody's problem. Business, labor, private citizens. Negro and white alike.

So everyone is needed to solve it. Help is needed in building and improving housing, creating job-training centers, re-evaluating hiring practices, participating in community programs of health and education.

Here are some efforts already under way:

As a start, Detroit auto companies have hired some 30,000 ghetto residents.

As a start, Aerojet-General Corporation bought an abandoned plant in Watts, staffed it with 430 unskilled employees and secured a 2.5 million-dollar Defense Department contract.

As a start, United States Gypsum Company has rehabilitated 12 slum tenements (250 units) in Harlem and is now engaged in other projects in Chicago and Cleveland.

The Avco Economic Systems Corporation recently opened a printing plant in Roxbury, Massachusetts, with 69 employees. The operation marks the beginning of a training and permanent-employment program for an eventual 232 hard-core unemployed.

The Fairchild Hiller Corporation, working with the Model Inner City Community Organization, is establishing a wood products plant in Washington D.C. that will eventually be community-owned, with newly employed slum residents sharing in profits.

A group of life insurance companies has made a commitment to invest 1 billion dollars for housing and jobs in slum areas. More than one-third of this has already been earmarked for specific projects.

Many other businesses throughout the country are taking up this call to action. But it's only a beginning. To make a truly effective beginning all businesses and industries must help. For the cost will be huge.

What can the individual citizen do?

First, the private citizen must educate himself to the dimensions of the problem. By reading. By listening to what his

own civic leaders have to say. By pondering what responsible broadcast and newspaper leadership recommends.

He can take a further step in joining citizens' organizations, working with local educational and planning boards, and lending his support to community efforts to lick the problem.

And there are things he can do personally.

As a start, interested groups are working in cooperation with local labor unions in helping young ghetto residents of Newark, Cleveland, Buffalo and Brooklyn to enter the building and construction trades. By recruiting, screening, counseling and tutoring, they have already helped 250 men from the Brooklyn area alone to gain union membership.

As a start, a former auto worker has formed a committee which will soon have Watts citizens farming some 30 acres for themselves for profit.

As a start, individuals, local businessmen, and corporations in St. Louis have contributed over \$150,000 to a neighborhood organization to rehabilitate slum dwellings and make possible resident ownership.

It's up to all of us.

Our cities have now become one of the greatest challenges facing this country. We feel America has the means to face this challenge and win.

What about you? Whether you are moved to act out of compassion or self-interest, do act. For whoever you are, whatever you do, you, in your own way, can help. And you can begin today.

For suggestions about kinds of constructive action you, your business, religious, social, or civic organization can take, send for the free booklet, "Whose Crisis? . . . Yours."

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Could this happen to us? To our families? To our way of life? Could this happen to America the beautiful?

Well, look around. You can see signs of it this very moment in every major city in this country. You can see it in the slums, in the jobless, in the crime rate. In our polluted air, in our foul rivers and harbors and lakes. You can see it in our roads strangled with traffic.

You know the problems confronting our cities. Now we must all do something about it. While there is still time. Before our cities become unfit places in which to live.

Why are the life insurance companies so concerned?

Our business involves people. Our service is security for their future. Unless the problems of our cities can be solved, we are dismayed at the prospect of greater personal tragedy and at the economic consequences.

The alarm has already been sounded. By the President of the United States. By concerned people all over America. America's life insurance companies—so long a part of the American scene and quite probably of your own life—are adding their voices to a call for action. We hope that call can help persuade men of good will, as businessmen and as private individuals, to act and act now.

Concerted action *now* can be effective. For the very cities that are suffering most have at their command human and economic resources unmatched anywhere else in this world. Now it is up to all of us to see to it that these resources are put to constructive use.

If It Works, Why Fix It?

by
Julian P. Van Winkle, Jr.
President

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Washington

program take as their primary target "waste." The liberals' primary target is military aid. There was nothing cynical about the entire Senate's shock at such consequences of military aid as the use of American-supplied weapons by both sides in the Indian-Pakistani and Arab-Israeli wars. The liberals' objection is to the tendency of aid to become a vehicle of American diplomacy, and then for politically angled aid to metamorphose into military aid. U.S. intervention in Vietnam, Church tells Idahoans, began as "just another foreign aid program" — and look at it now.

To call all this "isolationism," old or new, is to ignore the context of and the motive for these men's position. Morse's opposition to foreign aid, for example, is no fiercer than his animus against go-it-alone involvement in Vietnam. Since 1954, when Eisenhower and Dulles refused to sign the Geneva Accords, he has argued that the Security Council and Geneva — not the battlefield — were the proper places to take our case about Vietnam.

Maverick

At sixty-seven, Wayne Morse of Oregon is a throwback in personal style to the proud, intellectually arrogant, maverick style of Borah. Like Norris and La Follette, he finds party labels less important than his independence. In contrast to anti-war senators who were alienated from Administration policy by escalation in 1965 and by the failures of escalation in 1966, 1967, and 1968, Morse has opposed American involvement in Vietnam these last fourteen years both on points of international law, on which he is an expert, and on political and strategic grounds. He and his ally, Gruening, contributed the two nay votes against the Tonkin Gulf Resolution in August, 1964. Morse called it then, accurately and prophetically, a "pre-dated declaration of war." (It took the Administration three years to concede Morse the point. In 1967, Undersecretary of State Katzenbach called the Resolution a "functional declaration of war.")

Though the archetypal loner, Morse is protective of Gruening, and both are proud that they were so right four years ago about what the

Tonkin Resolution really meant, and less suspecting senators, like Fulbright, so wrong.* Few people took Morse's cranky view of the Tonkin situation seriously in 1964, when he first suggested the possibility of American provocation. Today it would be hard to find a senator who fully trusts the Administration's account of what did and did not happen in the Gulf of Tonkin on the night of August 3-4, 1964.

Two fallible gods

There is little point in someone like Morse trying to adjust his stance on the war so as to confuse hawkish opposition this year. He has been so far out against the war, so loudly for so long that he has a "kind of product identification" on the issue says a man who has worked for Robert Duncan, Morse's pro-Administration challenger in the Oregon Democratic primary on May 28.

Indeed, it is worth considering whether the voters wouldn't resent it if he did moderate his views. As George McGovern suggests, people do not have to approve of his views to want him in the Senate as a kind of insurance policy against their doubts about the war and the President. In a war in which nothing has been sure, least of all the Administration's assurances, doubters could count on one constant: Morse's unyielding opposition to the President (with whom he carries on an obscure personal relationship, in spite of everything). Two unbending, fallible gods — which had fate behind his logic?

This theory is perhaps validated by the fact that Morse's Democratic opponent, Duncan, has seemed to lose support as he edges away from his 1966 position. That year he lost a Senate race to Mark Hatfield crying, "If we don't fight in the Delta, we'll have to fight in the grasslands of the Columbia River." This year Duncan spoke of helping Lyndon Johnson "bring peace" to Vietnam. But his "product identi-

* Though he voted for the Resolution in the end, Nelson of Wisconsin also had something like the power of clairvoyance. He tried, unsuccessfully, to get Fulbright who was managing the Tonkin Gulf Resolution for the Administration, to accept an amendment making it plain the Congress was not approving any change in the limited "advisory" role of the United States in Vietnam.

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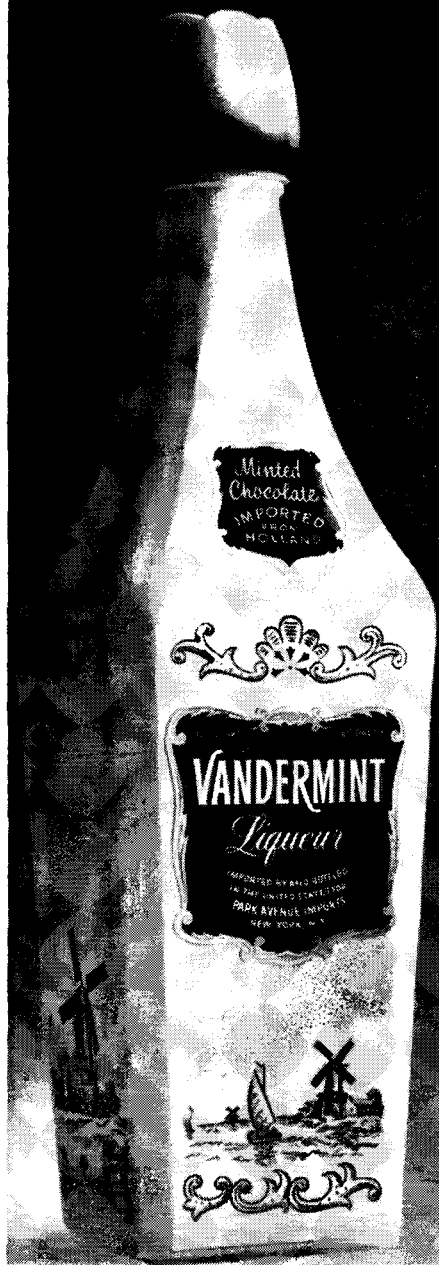
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Washington

fication," either as hard-liner or hedger, would seem to be one the voters have in quite sufficient supply. A third candidate in the Democratic primary, a superhawk, is cutting into Duncan's appeal, and for the first time the gamblers give odds on Morse.

Globalism

The most interesting Democratic-Republican race to shape up so far is in Idaho. It is proof that however good these senators' chances look now, they are not home free. Frank Church, like McGovern of South Dakota, was a quiet critic of the war before the 1965 escalation. As late as February, 1965, he was close enough to the Administration reservation to say, "The judicious use of both the arrows and the olive branch represents our best hope for avoiding a widening war in Asia." A moderate no more, he faces formidable opposition in November from a young Republican congressman who quotes Curtis LeMay approvingly, and doesn't like the State Department's "weak-kneed" attitude toward Russia. A far-right recall movement against Church failed badly last year, and though it focused attention on him as a war critic, it provoked conservative newspapers, which had never previously had a good word for the senator, to repudiate the recall as an extremist effort.

Forty-three, and at the end of his second term, Church would like to hold moderates and conservatives who don't buy his war views, but who objected to the recall's challenge to his patriotism. Church lacks the sort of commanding position in Idaho which McGovern seems to have in South Dakota, even though Idaho elects more Democrats and is more accustomed to splitting tickets. His voice is as loud as any opposed to the war, and yet it seems more equivocal. A foreign policy speech delivered to the Senate in February and widely distributed in Idaho was outspoken against the war. At the same time, Church made routine stops at safe and sound flagposts of consensus opinion. He spoke of the "brazen insolence" of "angry rebels" who burn their draft cards, and offered a slightly prissy thought for a hell-raising dove: "No argument can be won by bad manners." But more

suggestive than Church's use of anti-beard nostrums was the way he attacked the Johnson Administration. Consider the varying strains in these remarks:

"What . . . have we bought with armaments unlimited and foreign aid dished out on a global platter? . . . If not security, have we bought peace? . . . Our policy of global intervention has meant war not peace. During the past 25 years the United States has engaged in more warfare than any other major power. . . . I don't propose swinging the pendulum back to ostrich-like isolationism. One extreme needn't call for the other. I propose rather that we seek out the rational middle ground, where the limits of our intervention are drawn to correspond with the limits of our resources . . . [G]lobalism, our present foreign policy."

Blur

All this is of a piece with what the other anti-war senators say, and with the opinions of George Kennan, Walter Lippmann, and other scholarly, liberal critics of the trend of American foreign policy. And yet, there are allusive echoes. "Globalism," "our policy of global intervention . . . during the last 25 years"; these have different sounds to different people. No wonder that Church's challenger, Congressman George Hansen, thirty-seven, former Air Force man, insurance man, opponent of "funny money," Democratic spending, and "no-win" wars, picks Church up on it and speaks of an "embittered, extremist, home-front, *leftist-isolationist* minority in high places and low." (My italics.) Hansen now and then shrewdly throws out a line in the direction of "prudence." Thus, lacing his Goldwater gin with a touch of vintage — 1964 — Johnsonian vermouth, he opposes using nuclear weapons in Vietnam and deplores our "getting involved in a land war in Asia." If Hansen, an energetic conservative, echoes Republicanism of the early 1950s and 1964, it is fair to say that phrases of Church's catch a sufficiently pre-war isolationist or post-war "Fortress-American" flavor to blur the clash of his views with Hansen's just a bit. The one is not as chemically pure and distinct from the other, to put it another way, as is Wayne Morse's collective-security internationalism from Lyndon John-

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son's "big-stick" internationalism. In 1968, that blur may be the only way for a liberal Democrat like Frank Church to hold his own against a conservative Republican like George Hansen.

Gaylord Nelson was for a time faced with running against Republican Governor Warren Knowles, which might have made for a close race. Early in the spring, a group of Wisconsin businessmen, who feel Nelson is an effective advocate of Wisconsin's interests in Washington, reportedly dissuaded Knowles, whom they also like, from getting into a duel with Nelson. But there is no assurance that Knowles is out of the race to stay.

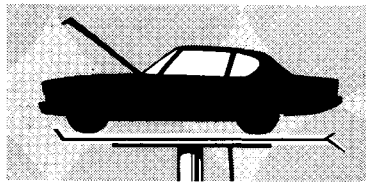
Alaska's Republicans are well enough financed to keep Ernest Gruening worried, and his eighty-one years make him vulnerable. Despite his age, he is chipper, a figure of probity and dignity whose career has been less in politics than in government — as the Interior Department's Director of Territories and Island Possessions under Harold Ickes, and later as territorial governor of Alaska. Until recently, he thought that the war would not be the issue in Alaska which it is in other states. "The war came late to Alaska," he says. "One reason is that ten years ago, after statehood, a lot of defense installations were put into Alaska because of its proximity to Russia. This made any notion of a threat in Asia seem distant." Gruening is not much interested in election-year calculations about the war. "I'm quite prepared to stand or fall on my position on Vietnam," he says.

Twists

Whatever the President thought of running with critics of his policy in other states, these senators would gladly have done without LBJ at the top of their tickets. McGovern expected to run 40,000 votes ahead of the President in South Dakota if LBJ had run. All of them thought the President would lose their states. Their independence is proving an asset in looking for campaign funds among wealthy liberal well-wishers in places like New York as well as at home. The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee apportions funds to candidates without discrimination because of their views. Each can count on about \$15,000 from that source. Nelson, Morse, and McGovern have had reason to fear

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Washington

that Eugene McCarthy's and/or Robert Kennedy's entry into their states' presidential primaries would create a bothersome competition for money from anti-Johnson Democrats. On the basis of events, at least they need not fear anymore that these candidacies, however divisive, will stigmatize the anti-war position.

It can be argued that as there is no such thing as a majority "peace vote," so there is no such thing as a majority "war vote." The hawk vote is not necessarily a pro-Administration vote, as the more selective polls show. In 1966, several moderately dovish Republican senatorial candidates (Mark Hatfield, Charles Percy, Edward Brooke) defeated rather more pro-war Democrats (Robert Duncan, Paul Douglas, Endicott Peabody). But 1966 was something of a Republican year. This year, though, as the war seems to dominate such conventional categories, there are ironic twists. George Hansen is campaigning in Idaho not only against the profligacy of liberal Democratic spending policies but against tight money conditions under a Democratic President, which are to a large extent a consequence of the war Hansen supports!

The Northwestern and North Central Democratic doves have not particularly been stocking up on conservative votes on domestic issues. All voted for cloture on the civil rights bill this spring. And though Gruening and Church went along with the conservatives on several open-housing amendments, and though only Morse among them stood with twelve other liberals against an "anti-riot" amendment, their records as domestic liberals are as solid as any. There are only a scant number of Negroes (if a number of Indians) in Alaska, Idaho, and South Dakota. Yet Gruening, Church, and McGovern say that white fear of black revolution is as strong there as if the states had Chicago-sized ghettos. Their disinterested votes for cloture won't hurt them for the same reason they won't help them: there are no Negroes to move into white neighborhoods — or to vote for Gruening, Church, or McGovern for re-election. But a summer of violence, says Church, will hurt "all incumbents."

The senators might or might not agree with Richard Hofstadter, who wrote in *The Age of Reform* in 1955 that "from our earliest history as a nation there has been a curiously persistent association between democratic politics and nationalism, jingoism, or war." For now, they must each of them face electorates which are not experienced in contemplating distinctions between collective security and unilateral intervention; between "isolationism," "internationalism," and "nationalism"; and between what those words meant in the contexts of 1940, before and after August 6, 1945, in 1954, and what they mean today.

Those issues, and the ways in which Democrats and Republicans talk about them, have changed since 1960. LBJ's withdrawal from the campaign at home and from a commitment to "win" in Vietnam changes them more.

— Michael Janeway

United Nations



There was a time late last year when both the United States and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam were willing to involve the United Nations in the Vietnam War. It could have been a modest beginning, but it came to nothing.

On September 20, Secretary General U Thant received through a trustworthy intermediary an inquiry from the NLF. The Front was interested in sending two to three men to the United Nations and wanted to know whether they could get United

States visas. Clarifications were requested and an answer to them transmitted to Ambassador Goldberg early in December. The State Department came forward with a proposal that amounted to a rejection: inasmuch as a decision had been made to refer the Vietnam problem to the UN Security Council, it was up to the latter to issue an invitation to the NLF. In such case the necessary visas would be granted. Every informed diplomat understood as well as Washington that the NLF would never send representatives to the UN at the invitation of the Security Council.

The project was dropped, and the few people who were aware of it thought that Washington had made a mistake. This view became widely held when the facts were revealed in the *Washington Post*. Among those who knew were most members of the Security Council. The incident contributed to their lack of enthusiasm at the prospect of a UN involvement in Vietnam. The U.S. Mission to the UN was not enthusiastic either, but it had no choice, as the Senate had approved by an overwhelming majority a resolution introduced by Senator Mansfield to enlist the Security Council in the search for peace in Vietnam. The Senate had not considered the possibility that after a bitter debate a majority of Security Council members would support a resolution contrary to the U.S. position. A proposal, for example, that the United States stop the bombing of North Vietnam unconditionally was certain to receive not only the affirmative vote of Communist bloc and neutral nations but even those of several U.S. allies.

Mirror

This was the third time the United States tried to involve the United Nations in the Vietnam issue and got nowhere. The reason was not a lack of interest, as the general debate at the 22nd Session (1967) of the General Assembly amply demonstrated. One hundred out of 109 speakers dealt with the issue of Vietnam in detail; 44 of them (as compared with 28 the previous year) called for a bombing halt. Many critics charged the United States with aggression in Vietnam and expressed great admiration for the way a small nation of undernourished peasants in black pajamas has stood up to the greatest power the world has ever

known. In some cases these views were not expressed publicly, but they influenced attitudes and decisions.

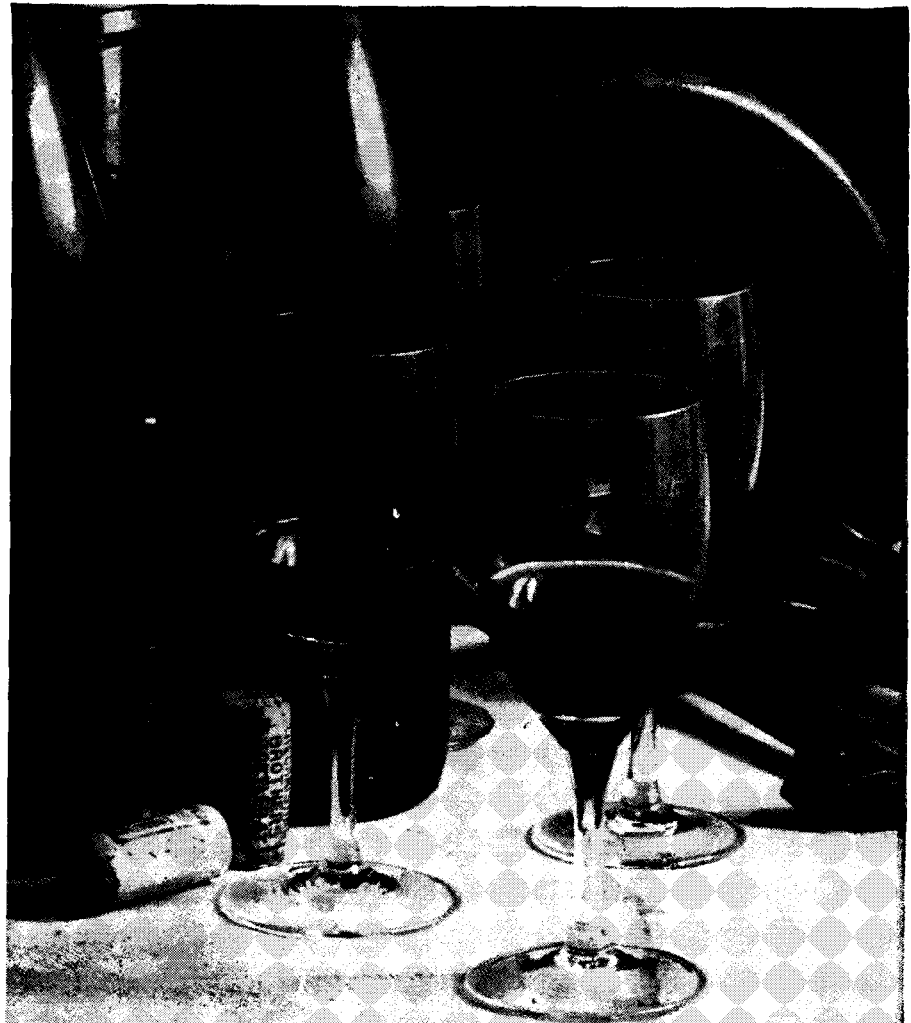
Under the circumstances the UN, on the whole, did not believe it should assume responsibility in the matter. An African diplomat not unsympathetic to the West summed up the feelings of a great many of his colleagues when he said: "The United States got itself into this mess; let the United States get out of it."

No one at the UN doubted that the efforts by Senator Mansfield were well meant, but it was felt they ignored the mood of the United Nations today. It is because of this mood and the contrasting perspectives it reflects that the world body is unable and unwilling to help Washington out of its predicaments. The Security Council, especially after it grew from eleven to fifteen members, mirrors to a considerable extent the political views prevailing at a given moment in the General Assembly. And the majority in the Assembly is made up of countries from the world's Southern half, enmeshed in the problems of overpopulation and creeping hunger, bitter because of the failure of nonalignment and the UN's inability to deal with racism in Africa, convinced that their role in world politics is minimal.

Recent debates in both the Security Council and the General Assembly have indicated a feeling that the chance for a solution at the UN was to be found in an understanding between Washington and Moscow, and that there was no chance in the absence of such understanding. When the superpowers dominate the scene, preventing resolutions from passing, or if passed, from being implemented, most small nations are not inclined to undertake new, bold initiatives for the preservation of peace. This consideration applies with particular force to the problem of Vietnam.

Who represents whom?

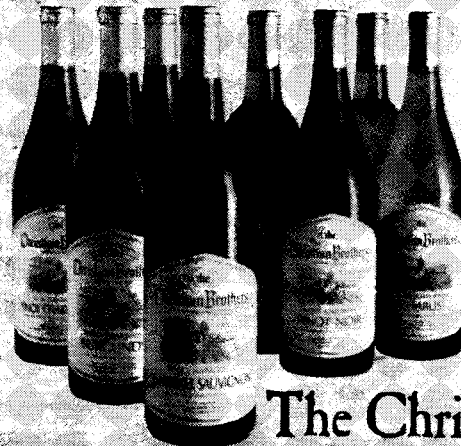
There are both theoretical and practical considerations for the widespread desire to steer clear of the Vietnam issue. In 1954, after the French defeat at Dienbienphu, considering that of all the parties directly or indirectly involved only France was a member of the United Nations, it was decided to call a non-UN conference in Geneva. The United States is today in much the same position as France was thirteen



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United Nations

years ago. The two Vietnams and Communist China are not UN members; accordingly, Hanoi and Peking refuse to recognize the competence of the UN in the Vietnam issue. Peking's views are compounded by the fact that it sees what it considers a usurper (the representative of Nationalist China) occupying its seat in the Security Council. In the Council itself two permanent members, the Soviet Union and France, are strongly committed to the view that the UN is not competent to act.

At the time the issue came up for consideration before the Council in 1966, a French diplomat recalled that when the United Nations was involved in the Algerian issue prior to independence, it never proposed specific solutions. It merely debated whether or not it should support independence for the territory, thus implicitly recognizing that it was the responsibility of France and France alone to find a solution in Algeria. Paris never proposed that the UN should come up with some magic formula, nor would the organization have acted if requested to do so.

Legalisms

Washington is probably less aware than the U.S. Mission to the UN that certain subjects are taboo as far as nearly all the African and the Asian and a good number of the Latin-American delegates are concerned. The perspective of these people is different and deeply influenced by the recent history of their countries. For example, while Washington offers assurances of its desire to seek a political solution in Vietnam, it also offers legalistic reasons for the maintenance of its military presence and activities there. But it was with legalism that the great powers in the past justified their hold over the territories of the same countries which today represent a majority in the General Assembly. Algeria was denied the right to seek independence because under French law the territory was an integral part of France. And the word "aggression" has often been spoken by colonial powers to condemn whoever supported movements of national liberation. The new countries have just as often rejected the self-proclaimed "right" of the great powers to "punish" what the

latter consider aggression. Today it is Portugal which cries "aggression" because African countries assist Angola and Mozambique in their struggle for independence and are indifferent to Lisbon's legal definition of the two territories as Portuguese provinces.

The issue of aggression, on which the American case mainly rests, is widely rejected as lacking in logic and pertinence. Third World countries fail to see why efforts by North Vietnam to overthrow a hostile regime in the South should be more of an aggression than the initiatives by the CIA in toppling governments in Guatemala or Iran simply because such governments are considered hostile to United States interests. Nor do they understand why support of the National Liberation Front by North Vietnam should be branded aggressive and not the United States's role in supporting anti-Castro activists in the military operation that ended in the Bay of Pigs disaster.

Holy war

The United States seems to some UN diplomats to be contributing to the confusion because instead of admitting candidly its strategic interests, it prefers to speak in terms of a Communist menace to the world. Very few Afro-Asian (or for that matter European) countries accept the American thesis that Communism must be contained in Vietnam lest the whole of Asia fall under the dominance of Red China.

U Thant put the problem in these terms: "I have repeatedly stated how wrong it is to regard the war in Vietnam as a kind of holy war against a particular ideology. I have expressed the view that the motivating force on the part of those who are being charged with this ideology is really a strong sense of nationalism, a desire to win their national independence and establish their national identity. It is nationalism, and not Communism, that animates the resistance movement in Vietnam against all foreigners, and now particularly against Americans."

The countries subscribing to U Thant's statement — they are a majority, largely silent, baffled, and frustrated — also believe that far from being an aggressor, the National Liberation Front is the only legitimate representative of the people of South Vietnam. This is yet

another view which springs in part from their own recent historical experience. It may prove particularly relevant, given Ambassador Goldberg's assurance before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the United States is willing to accept the participation of the Front in an enlarged Geneva Conference or in any Security Council discussion of Vietnam.

Another parallel with the situation in Algeria prior to independence might be useful. (It must be remembered that Algeria and Vietnam are the only two Third World countries which acquired their independence after a long and bloody struggle.) The war between the Algerian nationalists (FLN) and France could have ended some two years earlier had the Algerians been willing to accept the French contention that the FLN was but one of a number of political forces representing the Algerian people. Furthermore, the new countries remember how during the closing part of the colonial period, puppet governments were set up in a number of territories striving for independence, and the various fronts of national liberation were invited to come to terms with them.

"Proof"

What the United States is willing to consent to today the colonial governments were insisting upon only a few years ago. But today, as then, the "proof" of legitimacy varies according to historical experiences. To most Afro-Asians, a government fighting against foreigners, especially if they are white, is preferable to one that accepts or invites their presence. I have often heard the problem put in these general terms: If North Vietnam withdrew its forces from South Vietnam would the Front of National Liberation collapse? Certainly not. If the United States withdrew from South Vietnam would the Saigon government stay in power? Not another twenty-four hours. Hence the Front is a legitimate spokesman for the Vietnamese people, while the Saigon government is merely an American puppet. All this may sound simple and unsophisticated to countries that have had a long history and a variety of political experiences. To the new countries it is instead the very essence of logic.

The fact that a great many nations are unsympathetic to the American

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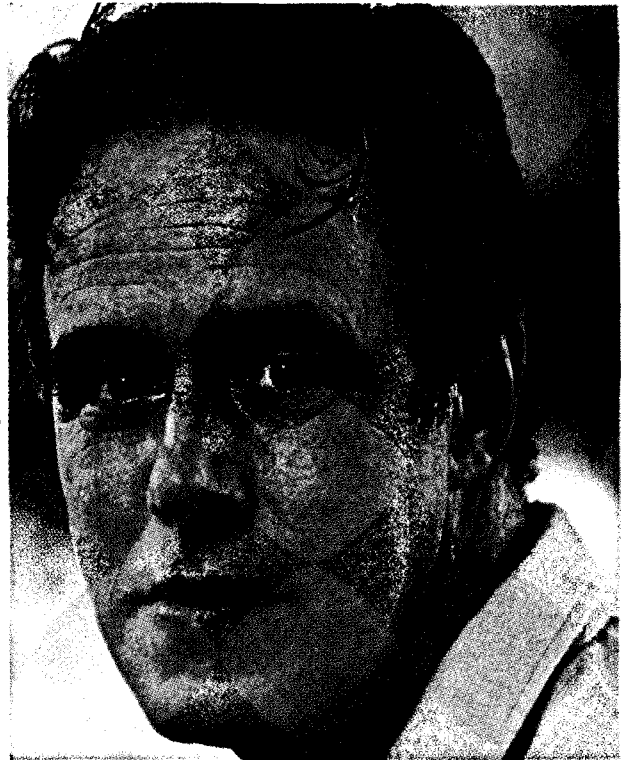


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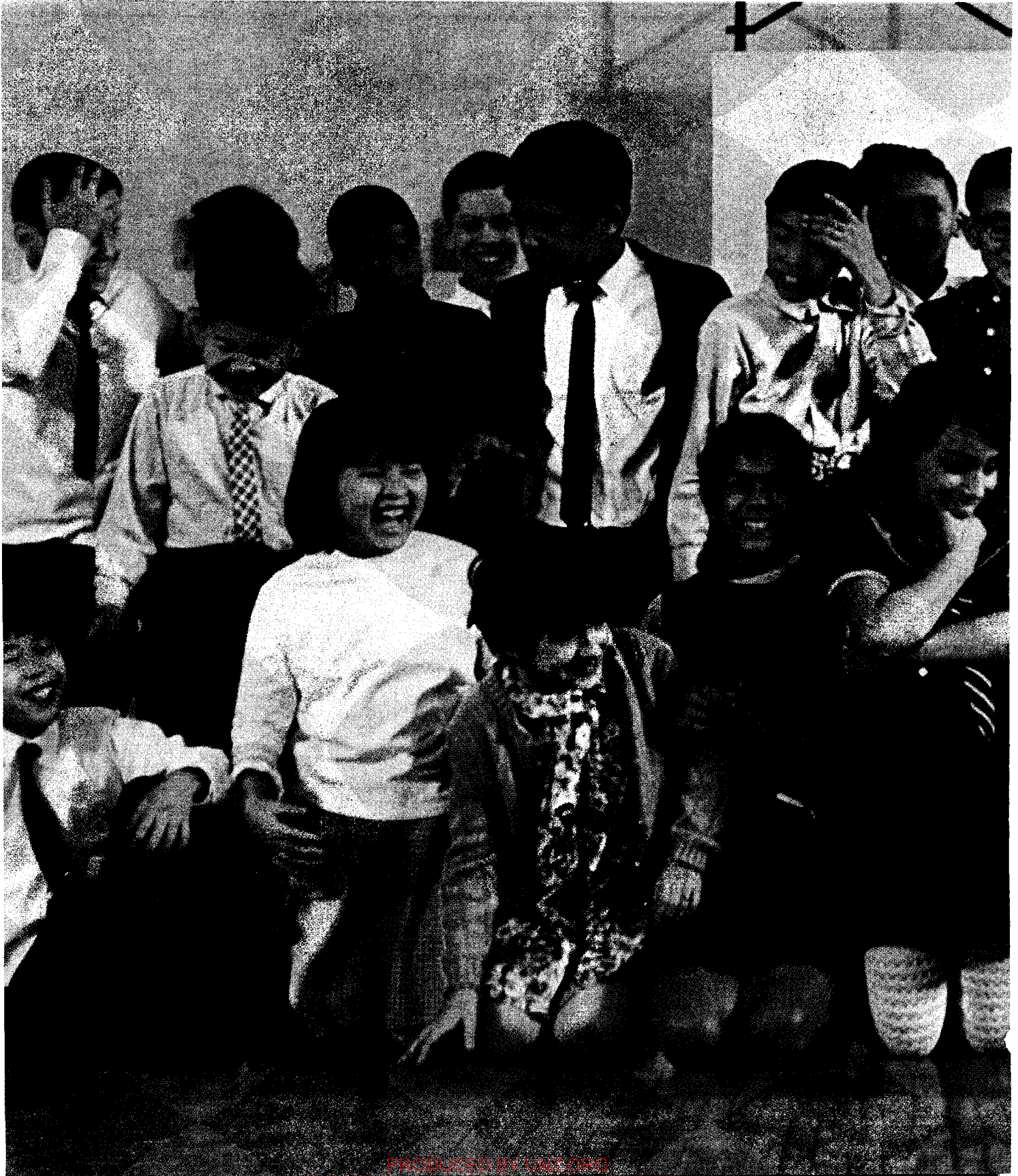
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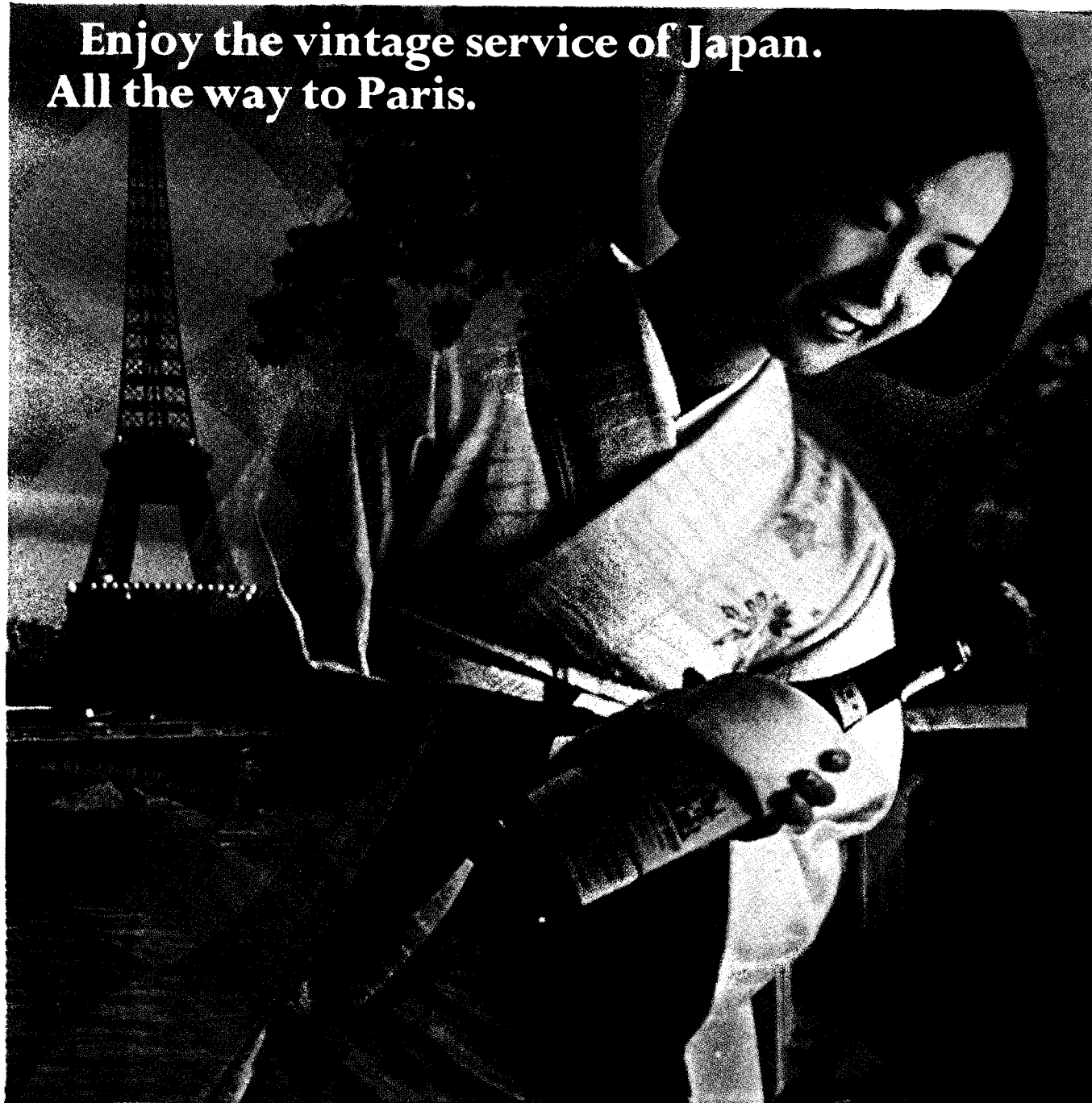
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position is only partly responsible for the inability of the United Nations to deal with the Vietnam problem. The decisive factor is probably that the international organization is not in a position to play a positive role. The UN could do either of two things: issue a proclamation of principle or intervene directly to restore the peace. The first alternative would be largely useless, the second unthinkable. The resolutions suggested by the United States, but on which Washington never managed to get a vote, would call for auto-determination and the convening of a conference. Everyone, including the Communist countries, agrees in principle; the irreconcilable differences concern implementation.

In the circumstances, what positive role could the Security Council play? As the French representative put it at the time of the Council's debate: "The intervention of the United Nations at the present stage . . . would, in our opinion, but add to the existing confusion. In the absence of a real discussion between the parties essentially involved, it could but lead to misunderstanding." The same point was made with equal force last December when the United States was sounding out Security Council members on the chances of a Vietnam debate.

As to an eventual peacekeeping role by the UN in Vietnam, U Thant's own philosophy comes into play. He is against committing the organization in a dispute in which a superpower is one of the parties. In this case, both superpowers are parties. Nor will he ever cease to consider the two superpowers' own views on peacekeeping. The United Nations could overcome without excessive difficulty the opposition of Britain or France, as it did during the Suez crisis of 1956; it would never survive the determined opposition of either Washington or Moscow.

Thus, apart from any other considerations, it is likely that the opposition of the Soviet Union to a UN involvement in Vietnam would be more than sufficient to deter the Secretary-General from suggesting any action. U Thant does not forget that the Soviet views on peacekeeping led to crises that almost wrecked the organization. It was precisely

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on that score that Nikita S. Khrushchev came to pound his shoe in the General Assembly hall (1960) and that the 19th Session (1964) was prevented from taking any initiatives leading to a vote. The Security Council could of course overrule the Secretary-General on a peacekeeping issue, but it is not likely to do so, at least in regard to Vietnam.

Vietnam, U Thant has said, is a problem for the Vietnamese and the great powers to solve. Should the parties concerned come to an agreement, the United Nations could at that time help implement it. The organization could, for example, take steps to ensure the fairness of an election or a plebiscite.

No exit

For the moment, the UN can provide no exit from Vietnam; it can do little more than exert a moral influence. Most delegates at the United Nations, including the "friendly" ones, take it for granted that whatever opinion they express in behalf of their governments, President Johnson will pursue whatever policy he chooses. Much that comes out of Washington tends to confirm this pessimism. If debates at the United Nations have had some value, it is primarily in showing to Washington that friends and critics alike are unhappy about what we are doing in Vietnam. The former say it was foolish to get involved, the latter that it was unjust and immoral.

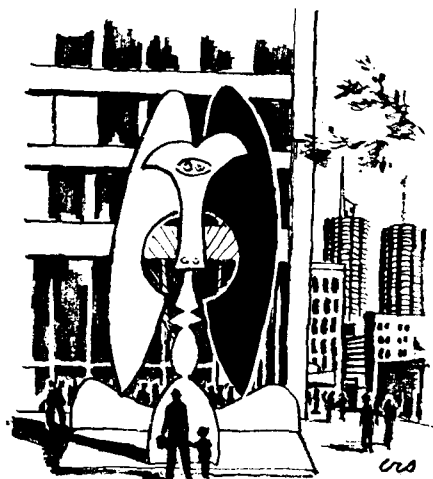
Both friends and critics would like to help in ending the war, but what the United Nations can do is not enough, and what Washington would like the United Nations to do cannot be done. — *Mario Rossi*

Illinois

Television cameras trained on the Democratic convention at Chicago's International Amphitheater this August will play on scenes symbolic of tensions that divide the nation and the state of Illinois. The Amphitheater itself stands in the famous Stockyards, between immense black ghettos and the all-white working-class "Back of the Yards" district. The mayhem inside could well surpass in bitterness the fierce political bloodletting of old for which the Amphitheater has been the site. But if efforts to work within political

channels to promote racial progress and an end to the war are blocked, the protest in the streets outside the convention hall could make the confrontation inside seem like child's play.

The police fear the sparks of violence will be furnished by an "influx of trained outside agitators." In response to an anti-war group's claim that it will have 500,000 protesters on hand during the convention, the police are outfitting their



men with disabling chemical sprays, and giving tactical training to special anti-riot units.

It is not possible to say whether carefully planned anti-war protests will develop into full-scale race riots similar to those of the past three summers. Radical black leaders discreetly disclaim any planned violence ("We're just gonna lay back, man, and let the whites cut each other up"), and even Dick Gregory claims that the marchers he proposes to lead will obey traffic lights. Nonetheless, the city is undeniably tense about the prospect of violence, and some responsible black leaders characterize the sensationalist reporting of several of the newspapers as self-fulfilling prophecy. Chicago miraculously escaped serious outbreaks last summer, owing in part to cooperation from gang leaders who calmed incipient disorder. Relations between the gangs and the police have since deteriorated.

In an intriguing but disappointingly undetailed section of its report, the President's Commission on Civil Disorders, headed by retiring Illinois Governor Otto Kerner, describes the typical rioter as being better educated than his nonrioting neighbor, and often employed but in a position which he feels does not reflect his capabilities. An indepen-

dent expert, Irving J. Rubin of the University of Michigan, contends that detailed analyses of riot areas reveal that the most resentful blacks and most frequent rioters are not "riffraff" but persons who believe that were they white, they would be seeing their efforts reflected in greater economic and social rewards.

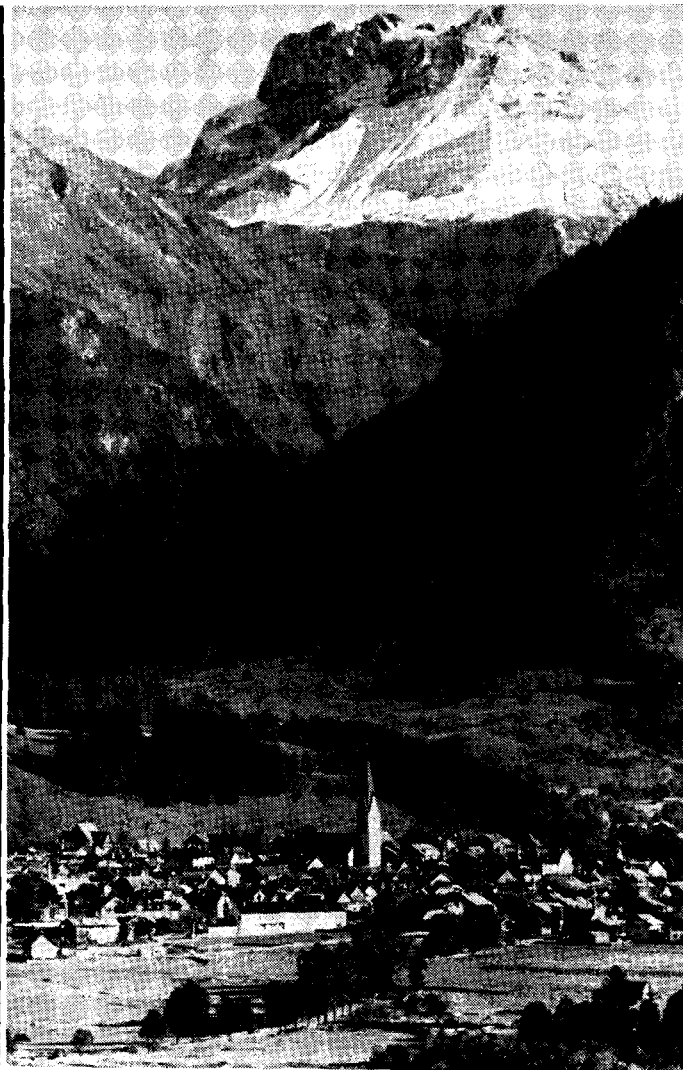
Circumstances in Chicago seem to bear out this sociological analysis, at least in part. Successful blacks, unquestionably more bitter this year than last, commonly characterize the Kerner report as having nothing to say to the black community; its sole value in their eyes will be as the ultimate, official statement to whites about racism.

Riot for progress

This new attitude, which may be what the Kerner commission means by the "racial pride" it reported the typical rioter possessed, can be seen in the tripling of visitors to the city's African-American History Museum in recent months, in the proliferation of black arts groups, and in the erection of a monumental "wall of respect" celebrating black power on the city's South Side. Thus far it has not often meant that blacks refuse to work with whites; instead, they merely tend to go, increasingly and by choice, their own separate ways.

One aspect of the new attitude is a reluctance to deplore mass violence: "After all, only the riots brought any change at all." Some of the more historically minded compare the situation in Detroit today with that of post-war Germany and Japan; they contend that areas can and will be rebuilt more quickly after they have been devastated.

For Mayor Richard Daley, these changes in sentiment mean trouble because with them comes polarization of the great voting blocs on which the Democratic machine is built. Daley is fond of stating that Chicago has more middle-class Negroes than any other city in the world. He stands to lose these voters if middle-class militancy increases. Daley also is aware that violence brings progress only so long as it incurs limited reaction. The black riots thus far have been largely destructive of their own communities, comparable in popular effect to self-immolation by Vietnamese Buddhist monks to draw attention to injustices. Once appreciable



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numbers of outsiders are injured, however, public reaction can dramatically change. Sargent Shriver felt early tremors of this in seeking O.E.O. appropriations last autumn from an increasingly backlash-minded Congress. In Chicago's eleventh congressional district, Democratic incumbent Roman Pucinski, once a favorite of the Americans for Democratic Action, shifted so far to the right after the West Side riots of 1966 that even his Republican opponent now calls him a "raving racist."

Calculated accommodation

Mayor Daley would cleave to the camp of the unforgiving if there were to be violence this summer, particularly if it were to spread into the white neighborhoods which fringe Chicago's ghettos. Daley has already criticized the Kerner report for failing to pin the blame for the riots on "criminal elements in our society." Last summer Daley's principal effort to keep the city under control was to instruct his police to make mass arrests whenever friction developed on the streets; Cook County judges frequently cooperated by setting bail bonds so excessively high that suspected troublemakers were indefinitely jailed.

Daley recently announced a Chicago version of the familiar smorgasbord of summer programs to get the kids off the streets and private industry into the ghettos. An aide optimistically predicts the programs will reach 800,000 Chicagoans this summer. But so far, Daley has been unable to devise any effective new approaches for alleviating racial tension. In part this is because the message that times are changing has not been communicated throughout the huge local government bureaucracy. Whatever good intentions the city machine may have at the higher echelons, the effect often is negated by lower-level bureaucrats and clerks. Because Daley is reluctant to delegate authority, programs are seldom devised by lower officials closest to the problems. And the problems demanding solution look more and more like dilemmas. For example, most blacks agree that lack of job opportunity is a high-priority complaint. But menial work is available to those willing to accept it.

Daley's difficulties are compounded by the fact that at this point he feels the prod of no clearly defined, articulate bloc to which he can respond by moving left. In the summer of 1966 Daley used the specifically itemized demands for improved housing of Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference as a shield against white resentment when he made concessions to King. A favorite Daley tactic, which might be termed calculated accommodation, was utilized to stop the tenant-union movement sponsored by SCLC. Apparently under pressure from city hall during the hair-trigger August days of that year, the realty firm chosen as the primary union target agreed to bargain with the SCLC tenants before they had sustained sufficient grievances to organize a truly unified group. After its premature victory, the union was never able to force the landlord to conform to the terms of their contract, and during the winter months the union, and SCLC, withered away. Although Dr. King talked bravely of challenging Daley at the polls in 1967, it was a forlorn exercise. There is now in Chicago no truly effective civil rights or tenant-union organization, and since last autumn there has been no single person speaking for a significant portion of Chicago's black community.

Mayor Daley may have been too successful for his own good in laying waste the old-style rights pressure groups, like SCLC, which operated effectively outside the regular political process. Now, although some developments of interest to black power advocates are occurring within Cook County, significant political pressure has yet to be directed at the mayor. Accordingly, progress in race relations has recently been slow.

A case in point is the school board's recent implementation of a minor busing plan for some 400 elementary school children. Even this innovation was very nearly canceled when a clamor of protest from white communities all but drowned out the good reasons—chiefly overcrowding in ghetto schools—for the transportation plan. A weakened busing proposal finally won out, but it was a victory not forced by blacks but engineered by whites such as Cardinal Cody, whose timely announcement of a

mandatory busing program for Catholic schools set an example for the city to follow.

Paranoid politics

On paper Daley's hegemony over Chicago looks as solid as ever, particularly in light of his overwhelming re-election to a new four-year term last year. But a leadership vacuum which becomes apparent when one looks closely at the civil rights and school board situations suggests that Daley's appearance of invincibility exists in the absence of challenge. Despite Daley's intervention, Democrats have lost important recent elections for board president, treasurer, and sheriff of Cook County. The county is traditionally a fiefdom subject to the control of the Chicago Democratic machine, even though the county in fact encompasses a large spread of suburban towns. Even more significant, the Democratic Party may lose control of the state government in the fall elections for the first time in eight years.

Parochial and even politically paranoid judgments contributed to the selection of perhaps the weakest Democratic slate in Illinois in years. Daley, sensing widespread disenchantment with the Johnson Administration, wanted at least one strong vote-getter on the Democratic ticket in Illinois. His choice was Adlai Stevenson III, who had proved his strength at the polls twice. He led the state ticket in an at-large election for the state House of Representatives in 1964. In 1966 he ran 500,000 votes ahead of the rest of his ticket to win election as treasurer in the face of the Republican landslide (which claimed as victims every other state Democratic candidate, including the venerable Senator Paul Douglas). Stevenson wanted to be slated for governor, but this was unappealing to the mayor, who did not relish having a man of young Stevenson's independence in the governor's chair. In addition, Daley lieutenants who are jockeying for position on the assumption that the mayor will not stand for re-election in 1971 objected to advancement for Stevenson, particularly to a position as governor, where he would have power and seniority over whoever among them might eventually win the Chicago mayoralty. Consequently, it was decided to slate Stevenson for U.S. senator against Everett Dirksen so

that if Stevenson won he would move along to Washington, where he would be less of a threat to the futures of other state politicians.

But Stevenson did not get the message. With what he apparently thought was acquiescence from the mayor, he pressed his case for the governorship in an initial closed-door nominating session. Noting that if he were slated for the Senate rather than the statehouse he would be compelled to speak out on foreign affairs, Stevenson gratuitously warned that he might publicly differ with the President's policy on Vietnam. Whether Stevenson felt that personal honesty required such a declaration, whether he was making a last desperate grab for the statehouse, or whether, as is probable, both considerations played a part, is now immaterial, for his statement provided the pretext for a no-holds-barred attack on him by party machinists, who feared and distrusted his refusal to play politics at their level. When this local political resentment was reinforced by word from Washington that the President wanted no part of Stevenson, Daley finally felt constrained to drop him.

Johnson's *faux pas*

Among the lessons to be learned from this contretemps which may be instructive in an election year often compared with 1948 is that Lyndon Johnson was in a far weaker position in Illinois than was Harry Truman. Twenty years ago the reform slate of Adlai Stevenson for governor and Paul Douglas for senator carried Illinois, and so helped ensure the election for Truman. By joining in the machine's execution of the late governor's equally reformist son this spring, Johnson demonstrated shortsighted judgment and lack of restraint in the face of dissent. By comparison with Johnson, Dick Daley seems a master Svengali. The President's *faux pas* in tipping the balance against Stevenson was undoubtedly not lost on Daley. A fervent believer in party unity, the mayor was not publicly supporting anyone but the President before Mr. Johnson's announcement that he would not run. But there were auspicious indicators for Kennedy partisans, in spite of the fact that Kennedy could not have won more than a handful of Illinois delegates without Daley support. Daley apparently suggested the proposal,

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Illinois

later adopted by Kennedy, that the President appoint a commission to reappraise the war. In sponsoring Stevenson, a likely dove, for the Senate against Dirksen, a confirmed hawk, the mayor may well have been attempting to hedge his bets on the Vietnam issue.

Even in March the mayor seemed almost jovial in parrying questions about Kennedy's entry into the race. Daley has close ties to the Kennedy camp; one is to Kenneth O'Donnell, a prominent member of both Kennedys' "Irish Mafia." Even before the New Hampshire returns were in, Daley's public assertions of support for the President were sometimes tempered by the qualifier "if he runs." He is now critical of the war. The mayor's equivocal support for the President may have been one of the influential factors in LBJ's decision to retire.

The Democrats' problem now is that whoever wins the nomination will have the considerable burden in Illinois of carrying a mediocre Democratic slate. Although the candidates for the offices of senator and governor have been competent state officials, neither is likely to prompt much popular interest. Sam Shapiro, the genial gubernatorial candidate, has been with only slight unfairness described as "Illinois' answer to Abe Beam"; William G. Clark, the choice for the Senate, at first blandly suggested, "Dirksen can run on his record and I will run on mine" as state attorney general. But Clark echoes Daley's doubts about the war.

The Percy ploy

Republicans are jubilant. Says the leader of the party's county chairmen, "The Democrats could not have picked a better slate from the Republican standpoint. I can't understand if they are overconfident or don't want to win." They are particularly relieved because some feared that Dirksen would be susceptible to a strong challenge by Stevenson on the same issues which Charles Percy used to great effect in defeating Paul Douglas in 1966 — age (Dirksen is seventy-two, Stevenson thirty-seven) and the war.

The war figures prominently in any discussion of Richard Nixon's prospects in Illinois because what-

ever subtle shadings he is adding to his position nationally, he is commonly regarded here as a hawk. Although Illinois Republican leaders favor Nixon, their support could not be called enthusiastic. In contrast, there is a strain of inarticulate but real dissatisfaction with the war among conservatives in the party. Illinois has no large defense industries to benefit from war spending, and business patterns in the department stores and other enterprises in the consumer-oriented sector of the economy are beginning to show distortion generated by the pressure of the war on the economy. Had Rockefeller vigorously sought the Republican nomination, he might have picked up important support in Illinois. Nixon's commanding lead results as much from liberal GOP default as from conservative strength. Before Rockefeller's March withdrawal, Percy was suggested as a favorite-son candidate, largely to keep the delegation free of commitments less easy to shake. He may now emerge as a vice presidential possibility, but his power base in Illinois is in fact weak.

Because the Republican slate in Illinois to emerge from the June 11 primaries will probably be formidable, the GOP national ticket, even if headed by Nixon, is likely to carry the state in November. This in turn would undoubtedly tip the current 12-12 balance in Illinois' congressional delegation to the Republicans, which could be of particular importance if the election is thrown into the House of Representatives.

Whether a Republican victory would have important substantive effects in Illinois is doubtful. The Republican organization in Chicago continues to be moribund, and if Richard Ogilvie, the president of the Cook County Board, succeeds as expected in his gubernatorial campaign, the patronage-rich board presidency will return by default to a Democrat and the Republican hold in the Chicago area will be lost. Ogilvie, a former sheriff, has won the reputation of being a good administrator. He insistently harps upon a crime-in-the-streets theme, and unlike Percy, will not attract the state's growing number of Negro voters.

The party is developing no significant new issues and appears unlikely, even if it wins in November, to experience the revitalization that

might have occurred had Percy won election in 1964 as governor, where his considerable administrative and staffing talents would have been fully exercised. A Republican like Ogilvie in the statehouse would mean a return to the traditional balance of power — Democratic control in Cook County, Republican control downstate — that characterizes state history and accounts for its backward policies in education (Illinois is 47th in state school support), civil rights (it has no open-occupancy and only weak fair-employment legislation), and finance (it has no income tax and verges on bankruptcy).

Ironically, Stevenson is the likely winner over the long run if the GOP wins a statewide victory. Because Stevenson's term as treasurer will not expire until 1970, he may well be the only state Democratic official still in office after the November election. The infighting which led to his elimination from the ticket may ultimately redound to his benefit if he appeals to reform groups and to Negroes as a martyr knifed in a smoke-filled room because he dared to take a stand against the war.

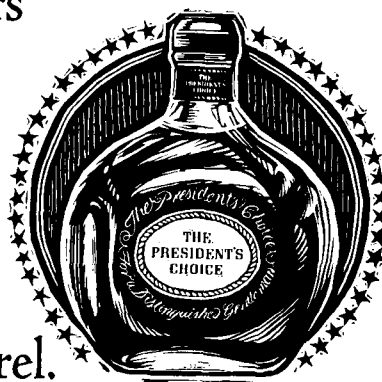
Chicago has traditionally lacked reform politics similar to those in New York City. In part this has been because business and civic leaders have been little inclined to be political partisans; Professor Edward Banfield's classic examination of political influence in Chicago is largely an analysis of how the so-called Establishment leaves important decisions to others through inertia and default. In addition, there is no distinct geographic area, like New York's Silk Stocking district, where a local establishmentarian reformer such as John Lindsay could get his start. When promising figures have appeared on the scene, they have tended toward the Paul Douglas prototype of eloquent ineffectuality, or have been prematurely shunted to national prominence, like the elder Stevenson.

It is in this context that the emergence of independent young political figures of some charisma and ability, such as Stevenson, may be of significance. Abner Mikva, the favorite in the race for the second congressional district seat now occupied by eighty-five-year-old Barratt O'Hara, is, like Stevenson, bright and fresh, and perhaps more tough-minded in terms of organiza-

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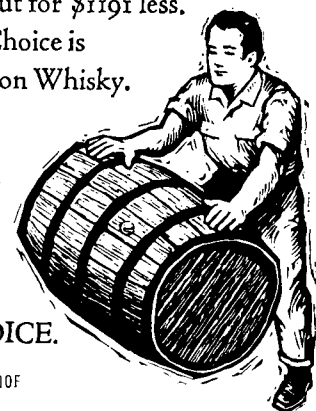
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THE PRESIDENT'S CHOICE.

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tion. Mikva was narrowly defeated for the same seat by the Democratic machine in 1966 but runs now with Daley's endorsement, demonstrating that an independent candidate can win party acceptance without excessive compromise if he forms his own strong base of voter support. A small group of independent black politicians, buoyed and counseled by Mayor Richard Hatcher of nearby Gary, Indiana, are beginning strenuously to contest machine control of their people. Sammy Rayner, Jr., one of their number who is challenging Daley's most entrenched black captive in Congress, William Dawson, summarizes their platform as "Freedom and peace — in whatever order you desire." By emphasizing themes with which young white political liberals such as Stevenson and Mikva can join, they may be introducing a welcome new element to Illinois politics. Stevenson's wry description of a party honoring him after he was dumped from the ticket as the "liveliest wake" he had attended may well strike the tone that reformers in Illinois will be sounding if the party regulars are wiped out in November.

— George A. Ranney, Jr.

Hungary



During a political satire program on Radio Budapest recently, a spaceship from Jupiter was reported to have landed. The visitor aboard was taken into the studio, and from his greeting, "Good evening, comrades," it was clear that Jupiter was Communist. In fact, he was up on Hungary's current move away from strict central planning to a market-run economy, which is called the New Economic Mechanism.

It was soon apparent that Jupiter was far ahead of Hungary in developing Communism. It had long since completed the transition from socialism, and was itself working on a New Economic Mechanism. The Hungarian host was surprised: "We are in the early stages of development, and yet we, too, are introducing the New Economic Mechanism." "Which one?" the man from Jupiter asked. "The first one." "Oh, well. This is our eighteenth."

The skit was suggestive both of Hungarian political liberalization in this twelfth year since the uprising and of popular skepticism about the economic reforms that went into effect January 1. The two are closely related: if the plan for decentralization of economic responsibility works, it will lead inevitably to pressures for decentralization of political responsibility. For this reason, the Hungarian experiment, the most radical in the Soviet system, is being watched with the greatest interest by all of Eastern Europe.

Backward

The reforms were needed because Hungary, which earns nearly half its national income from exports, found it could no longer sell in competitive markets, particularly in the West. A report to the Central Committee on export shortcomings sounded as if it had been written by a skeptical Westerner: "The profitability of our exports to the capitalists is low as a result of the high production costs; the technical level of production is backward; the quality of export goods does not meet required standards; our structure of production does not follow the requirements of the market."

There is another aim of NEM, less stressed by the regime but very much on the minds of Hungarians who must suffer two weeks' pay to disappear for a topcoat, or stand in line because of recurrent scarcities. That is to bring prices and wages into some sort of reasonable relationship, to create a situation in which only one member of a family has to work, and to smooth out the eccentricities of the system of supply and demand.

For these reasons, NEM, and no longer the revolution, is the prime topic of conversation here, in the drab taverns in the Csepel industrial suburb, in the faded velvet and gilt surroundings of Budapest's literary café, the Hungaria, and in the

domed Parliament building on the Danube. But just as the bronze plaques and wreaths commemorating the victims of the 1956 street fighting are still visible in Budapest, the lessons of the revolution are never very far in the background of Hungarian conversation.

1956

In a small second-floor apartment near the Lenin Boulevard, members of a typical family, the Horvaths, talked with me a few weeks ago about wages and budgets. But soon, with the same mixture of awe and pride that Americans would use in recalling a famous local flood or snowstorm, they were describing the scene in the street below when Russian tanks fired on Hungarian rebel troops in 1956, and how the concussion blew out all the windows in the Horvath home. There is no need today, as there was before 1956, to arrange with friends to ring the doorbell in a special way so that the family would know it was visitors and not the political police. Wages have increased by a third, and much greater variety is available in every shop, from the corner fruit stand to downtown department stores. Medical care has improved and is free, but one must wait five or six hours in the clinic. Colleges graduate eight times as many students as before the war, and most students get paid an allowance by the government. Every month or so another writer is rehabilitated. There are signs that Parliament is being given some real powers, if not of opposition, at least of review. Last fall, for the first time, a play written by a writer who fled to the West during the revolution was staged in Budapest. It got poor reviews, but quality, not politics, seemed to be the reason.

Soviet customer

It is a common saying in Budapest that Communist Party chief Janos Kadar, put in office to crush the revolution, has since granted all the rebels' original demands. But the original demands were mild compared with those expressed in later stages of the uprising: neutrality abroad; and at home, multiparty democracy and worker control of factories.

The counterrevolution, as the uprising is carefully labeled here, gets constant re-examination in the

Party journals. A recent issue of the historical journal *Szazadok* discussed the harm done to the regime because the Soviet Army had to intervene, or, in its words, "the negative consequences of the fact that the Hungarian working class and the revolutionary organizations were unable to defeat the counter-revolution unaided." The cause of this, or perhaps the effect, was that "anti-Soviet and nationalist views had a great influence on the masses." Whatever the liabilities of this dependence on the Soviets, there were important economic advantages as well, and in the years after 1956, the Soviet Union poured many millions of rubles into Hungary in the form of credits and technical help. The aid raised the standard of living. The cooperation led to trade agreements that even today provide for Russia to buy more than a third of Hungary's exports (compared with .03 percent purchased by the United States). At the same time, the Soviets supply all of Hungary's crude oil, 95 percent of its pig iron, and all of its semifinished aluminum, this produced from bauxite mined in Hungary.

For eleven years, there have been eager Soviet customers for whatever the Hungarians produced, from top-quality pharmaceuticals and electronics to the rattly Ikarus buses one sees all over Eastern Europe. But this closed-circuit trading system, despite its political advantages, had diminishing economic returns. Hungarian goods were not selling outside the bloc, though the nation needed these sales to finance the Western equipment and technical help it must have to increase productivity. To break the cycle, the economists convinced the Party to introduce the New Economic Mechanism. Its higher quality and productivity standards, they hope, will return Hungary to world markets.

What is NEM? For an object lesson, hail one of Budapest's hard-sprung, Polish-manufactured Warszawa taxis. Hungarian hackies curse them — "invented by the Russians and made worse by the Poles" — and indeed, one gets accustomed to seeing the chugging Warszawa machine lose races to a tiny two-cylinder East German car. This cannot go on. So now there is an agreement for Hungarian plants to make ball bearings to sell to Volkswagen in West Germany and for a few expen-

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Hungary

sive Volkswagens to be sold here. It will be some years before families like the Horvaths will buy a car from either bloc; for them, prices for the smallest models now represent two or three years' pay.

The real price

Since about 1960, the Horvaths have been able to divert more and more of their money from food and necessities to household furnishings and better clothes. A huge varnished wood television set dominates their living-dining room. It is the best available here, and cost 8400 forints (\$280), or about four months of Imre Horvath's pay. The Horvaths' relative affluence is based on a common practice in Hungary: all three members of the family work. Horvath and twenty-year-old Imre, Jr., are draftsmen in a plant on Csepel Island, and Mrs. Horvath is a government secretary. Their total income is a relatively generous one for Budapest—4900 forints a month, of which the husband earns 2100, the wife 1600, and the son 1200.

These figures from the Horvath budget illustrate a rule of Communist economics: where the government can easily control prices, it can keep them down to ridiculous levels, and thus keep down pressure for higher wages. The real price is paid by standing in line, putting up with cold, crowded transportation, and enduring the results of years of neglected building maintenance. But when intangibles like style, selection, and novelty enter the equation, prices and supplies are not so easy to control, and the government encounters surpluses of unwanted goods and shortages of wanted ones.

There will be a price for the selection, convenience, and style to be provided by NEM: A 2 percent rise in living costs is officially predicted, and many Hungarians are worried that it will be double that. The Horvaths will be able to absorb the increase, but many families without the extra income, or pensioners living on as little as 800 forints a month, will be hurt. The government has assured them that wages will rise enough to compensate. The Horvaths are skeptical of this promise, but in any case are

prepared to pay extra if NEM will really put the goods in the stores.

Profits and prices

NEM is really three separate programs, two of them to increase efficiency and one to protect the consumer. It goes far beyond the economic experiments in the Soviet Union, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia, not so much because of the innovations it has wrought but because it was introduced simultaneously across the entire economy rather than to selected plants or trade groups, as elsewhere in the bloc.

The first NEM program introduces profitability as the test of success instead of numerical "plan fulfillment." Prices will be based mostly on cost. For the first time, the cost will include interest on government loans to enterprises. Premier Jeno Fock, who has been as impressed as Janos Kadar by the arguments of the economists, explained the new investment system to Parliament: "The state used to place buildings, machines, and other equipment at the disposal of enterprises free of charge. This did not encourage thriftiness or the most economic use of the means of production. Therefore, a levy on fixed and working capital will be introduced nationwide."

Profitability will be the deciding factor when plant managers approach the state bank for loans. If the bank believes there is a need for a new product or expanded capacity, interest rates will be low. An unnecessary venture will be given a low credit rating and deterred by interest up to 10 percent. It is theoretically possible for Hungarian enterprises to go bankrupt, a new concept in Communist economics, though it is likely that government intervention would head off such catastrophes.

The second part of NEM extends the profit principle to the production line and managerial offices. Welders, sweepers, draftsmen, and directors will share in the profits if their plant earns money by producing salable goods efficiently.

Part of the profits go into a fund to be plowed back into the enterprise. The government takes another part. The rest will be shared, in varying proportions, by the engineers, idea men, and managers who play roles in creating what Marx

called surplus value. Marx stipulated that the worker should be given the surplus value he creates, but under NEM, a profit-earning manager can get up to 80 percent above his pay in bonuses, an engineer or foreman 50 percent, and a worker 15 percent.

If the plant loses money, a reverse incentive system comes into play. The bonuses disappear; the manager, in addition, will have his pay cut as much as 10 percent. He cannot escape this penalty by finding another job; the pay cut will follow him wherever he goes as long as his original plant continues to lose money.

Mysterious lingo

The third NEM program is price protection, at least until the market takes over the whole function of price setting, which Premier Fock predicts will take ten to fifteen years. The price of bread, about five cents a pound, has remained stable in Hungary since the war, through Stalinism, revolution, and reform. Fock has promised it will remain so at least through 1968, along with the prices of milk, flour, sugar, rent, heat, and light.

Other prices will be allowed to fluctuate between top and bottom limits. This will permit overstuffed shops to hold sales, and allow for seasonal changes in food prices. There will be no price controls at all on about 25 percent of consumer goods, most of them in the luxury range.

Terms like credit ratings, free market, and profits are mysterious lingo to use about a Communist economy, and the ideologists are struggling to adapt to it all. In one mood, officials are careful to say that NEM does not mean scrapping of a planned economy; it is only a way of making the plan more effective. In another, their criticism of the stupidities of central planning is so complete as to make it plain that NEM's aim is indeed to get rid of the old system.

On Csepel Island, the talk is more of unemployment and inflation than of ideology. The broad, flat island in the Danube has been Budapest's factory quarter since the nineteenth century, when the foundries and armaments plants of Manfred Weiss began to grow there to supply the Austro-Hungarian armies. Now Csepel has refineries, docks, and

steel and machinery complexes. But the horses and wagons, one-story cottages, and broad farmlands still give it the character of an overgrown Austrian village.

Class consciousness grew with industrialization, the official Csepel history says, and the workers on the island were in the forefront of the fight for Bela Kun's short-lived Soviet Hungary in 1919, and for the Communist regime of Matyas Rakosi after World War II. This same view of the rights and wrongs of society led them to fight against Rakosi and Sovietism in 1956. For weeks after the failure of the revolution, Csepel's workers' councils held out with general strikes and protests, until arrests crippled their leadership. Now the workers' councils are an embarrassing but safely remote item of recent Hungarian history.

There seems to be no intention of reviving them under NEM. Plans call for more trade-union participation in factory affairs, but the new labor code consigns the unions to their traditional tame role of enforcing contracts they have had little part in making.

In the Rakoczi Restaurant on Csepel's main street, a young Communist engineer outlined the problems the reforms will bring in his plant. "The Hungarian worker considers the factory his club," he said. "Too many of our workers use the plant to catch up on football results and gossip from the papers, to get cheap subsidized meals, and do as little work as possible." Under NEM, the "clubs" are being disbanded. With bonuses depending on production efficiency, managers are beginning to break the unwritten rule that has governed Hungarian labor relations for twenty-two years: since you're not getting paid very much, you don't have to work very hard.

NEM will mean layoffs and unemployment as padded labor forces are cut in the name of efficiency. After decades of propaganda about jobless workers in the West, officials are understandably reluctant to use the same vocabulary. Former Premier Andras Hegedus put it this way: "Uneconomic activities will not be able to continue. Manpower will be released, and between industrial branches and enterprises, the movement of manpower will increase."

Two methods have been introduced to cushion the unemployment. One is to pay new mothers a 600-forint-a-month allowance to stay home for two years after their babies are born. This is designed to take women off the job market and save state nursery costs as it increases the birthrate. It is too soon to tell if it will work. The other is to emulate the "guest worker" system used in the Common Market countries to get labor from Italy, Spain, Turkey, and Greece.

Spheres

NEM has not brought capitalism back to Hungary and will not do so. As long as the intertwining lines of Party and state participation remain dominant, profits will go to the state or its employees, and private ownership will be restricted, as it is now, to a few small shops and services. But the economic reforms raise a question far more important for Eastern Europe than the question of private ownership. That is the influence they will have in hastening erosion of political control that started in 1956 with destalinization.

Stalinism was condemned and dismantled not because it was immoral but because it was inefficient. In Hungary, the Soviet Union, and every other country in the bloc, the leadership had to face up to the fact that the police state and centralism were antiquated methods for running a modern industrial society. The economic reforms are a logical extension of this first, tentative political liberalization. They, in turn, will lead to further political freedoms.

"How is a factory manager in the provinces going to be able to exercise his new autonomy if the political control from Budapest remains?" the Csepel engineer asked. "All our lives we have been taught that the economic base determines the political superstructure. Both spheres will have to decentralize."

—Donald R. Shanor

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

Michael Janeway is an ATLANTIC editor. Mario Rossi covers the United Nations for the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. George A. Ranney, Jr., is a lawyer in Chicago. Donald R. Shanor is the Chicago DAILY NEWS's Bonn correspondent.



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letters

Supernation at peace and war

SIR: Dan Wakefield's "Supernation at Peace and War" (March *Atlantic*) is better than a novel. It reads almost like Dos Passos' *U.S.A.* Wakefield gives us an excellent panorama of the whole stupid, painful, heroic mess that is the American side of the Vietnam War.

HARRY R. WALLACE
Washington, D.C.

SIR: Within the past two weeks I have been in attendance at a national meeting where the two major topics for discussion and action were the war in Vietnam and the urban crisis. Material for both subjects had been carefully researched and prepared. But I saw and heard nothing there that in my judgment could touch in scholarship, sensitivity, comprehension, and literary excellence the major article by Dan Wakefield in the March *Atlantic*.

MRS. PORTER BROWN
*Board of Missions of the Methodist Church
New York City*

SIR: Dan Wakefield's brilliant tour of the United States makes at least one error serious enough to warrant correction because it involves the life and times of one of Boston's oldest teetotalers.

Dan reported that I had said in Minneapolis that the president of Boston University plied me with gin. Now, I did tell such a story, and it was a true one (I can still taste the foul liquid), but the man involved was not B.U. President Harold Case but another administrator.

Dr. Case's lips, as far as any of us could learn from exhaustive investigation, never touched gin or any other alcoholic substance. Nor did he, personally, ever attempt to "co-opt" the campus left, but rather aided it with a long series of edicts (viz., subjecting the B.U. *News* to

prior readership for control) which were so repressive as to promote general uprising and be, ultimately, unenforceable.

RAYMOND MUNGO
*Liberation News Service
Washington, D.C.*

SIR: I can only assume that Mr. Wakefield was on the fantasy portion of his journey when he wrote about me.

For better insight into where I'm at buy a plastic bag, flatten it, roll up the long side, and twist this roll tight. Then tie this twisted roll into a series of loose knots. Place a small eye screw in the center of a bright ceiling. Unravel a coat hanger. Cut an end from a large juice can, but first perforate the sides liberally. Perforate the center of the remaining end with a geometric series of holes, one being in the center. Puncture the outer perimeter with triangular holes from a can opener. Hook one end of the coat hanger through the eye in the ceiling. Bend a one-inch-diameter loop one inch from the other end, after putting the wire through the center hole of the can, open end down. Bend the last inch into a hook. Hook this through an end knot of the plastic, being sure it hangs free in the can. Place a large pan of water directly below.

Enjoy the company of family and friends for a convivial meal, drink, and chat. Seat everyone along the walls of the room. Turn off the lights, first being sure to put out the clock. Light it.

BOB BARANAUSKAS-PLASTIC MAN
San Francisco, Calif.

SIR: "Supernation" — altogether, terribly depressing. But a wonderful job!

C. P. HOLWAY
Hammond, Ind.

SIR: I wish to thank the *Atlantic* for Mr. Wakefield's fascinating overview of current American society. However, as a "good, solid, concrete" Dutch citizen of Grand Rapids, and as a student at Calvin College, I must comment on the remarks made by my local draft board clerk, Miss Lucy Folkema.

I agree that Calvin College is a good institution and that its students have "strong religious convictions." Yet those same convictions do not allow many of us to agree that because "wars have been

going on ever since biblical times, and will keep going on," that therefore we in some way support this war. All wars are not just, and it is up to the religious communities of this land to make that point very clear.

Religious convictions have caused many students at this college to vigorously oppose present U.S. policy in Vietnam.

CHARLES STRIKWERDA
Grand Rapids, Mich.

SIR: Without the ability to be eloquent or lengthy, thank you for your March issue. Mr. Wakefield states so subtly and beautifully what anyone, confused or silent or anything, has ever felt or can feel about the United States today.

PATRICIA KEREN
New York City

SIR: I was amused in thinking what might be the reaction of members of the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood if they should read the section of Dan Wakefield's article that refers to the "Hollywood Presbyterian Church." First Church is the Presbyterian Church in Hollywood, has some 8500 members and a large staff, is fundamentalist, and definitely straight. The West Hollywood Presbyterian Church on Sunset Boulevard at Martel has always been a small neighborhood church. But being only a few blocks from "the Strip," it has found itself in a position to minister to the hippies. (There is also a South Hollywood Presbyterian Church and a Christ (Japanese) Presbyterian Church.)

EDITH MCAULAY
San Francisco, Calif.

SIR: Congratulations on your March issue. Dan Wakefield's treatment of supernation was superb. While it is impossible to write about the Vietnam conflict and trouble in the streets without bias, Mr. Wakefield's obvious effort at objectivity is to be commended.

JOSEPH C. BOWLES
*Brevard College
Brevard, N. C.*

SIR: Although 100,000 is a large number of people to gather for a demonstration, there are millions who were not at the demonstration who have convictions about supporting the nation. Although such people might be called "super-

patriots" in Mr. Wakefield's terminology — this would seem logical considering the other suggestions he has made — we do exist. Furthermore, we are not all older members of the Establishment or people with large amounts of money, giving parties to be crashed by hippies. Some, like myself, are college students who are working our way through school so we will be qualified to change laws which are unfair or seem no longer to be expedient.

LAURA FUNK RATTAN
Rocky Mount, N. C.

SIR: I think the article by Dan Wakefield is extremely timely and certainly an important contribution to our current need to re-evaluate our entire Vietnam involvement.

EDWARD M. KENNEDY
*U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.*

SIR: In Dan Wakefield's supnation I found not a single experience, interview, observation, allusion that is favorable. Evidently Mr. Wakefield found what he was looking for. His book may be of some value to future historians re-examining the last third of the twentieth century in the United States, but it must be weighed as a biased type of investigation and reporting.

ROBERT I. ADRIANCE
Orono, Me.

SIR: Wakefield's cartooning of all who favor the war as a just one is as unfair as the accusation he tries so hard to disprove — that all who oppose the war are unwashed hippies or Communists.

DEIRDRE B. DAY
Dallas, Tex.

SIR: I was brought up short, in Dan Wakefield's absorbing piece, by references to me which were not only unfair but unfairly demeaning.

Given the premise that two reputable observers might have had different reactions to the same event — in this case, the Peace Mobilization March of April, 1967 — it is still misleading to excerpt certain quotes without their tempering phrases. As a long and very vocal opponent of our disastrous Vietnam policy, I was indeed disappointed in the march because I felt that in spite of its numbers and — as I wrote in the same piece quoted by Mr. Wakefield, "a wide range of affilia-

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Or like when you're adrift in a rowboat, sunning yourself after you've been in the middle of a 4-day answer to Carnival in Rio, and there's nothing on your mind except when to turn over.

And you know you're truly relaxing, not just standing still.

Or when you're lolling under a palm tree, awaiting the Wine Harvest Festival, which is followed by the Chess Olympiad, wondering why people who do well in one, don't in the other.

Sure, you know that Switzerland has famous resorts and music festivals and winter sports and summer sports and nightclubs and terrific shopping and unbelievable scenery.

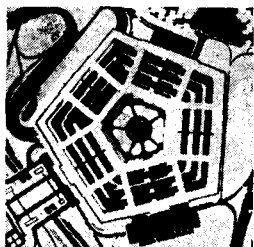
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Coming in the Atlantic



TWO CENTS AND MORE: Advice to the Secretary of Defense

Next to the President, the man with the closest-to-impossible job is the United States Secretary of Defense. When Robert McNamara stepped down as man-or-superman last March 1, the *Atlantic* asked several men of varying degrees of familiarity with the defense establishment, or varied views on it, to assess in a few well-chosen words the most pressing problems confronting his successor. The invitation was extended before the selection of Clark Clifford to succeed McNamara. The new Secretary may or may not be grateful for the advice on how to do his job, but it comes to him unsolicited in the June issue of the *Atlantic*. One expert, a former government official, was so bold as to suggest that the new Secretary "tie a thousand-ton bomb around his neck, embrace the President firmly, and jump off Key Bridge"; a senator recommended "the power of prayer." Six men got more specific. They are Ferdinand Eberstadt, who served the first Secretary, James Forrestal, and helped write the legislation creating the office; Adam Yarmolinsky, who served the seventh Secretary, McNamara; columnist Joseph Kraft; the French strategist General André Beaufre; historian Gar Alperovitz; and social critic Paul Goodman. Readers will profit from their reflections even if Washington does not.

■ **PAX** by Christopher Logue, an exciting long poem by the brilliant British novelist, playwright, and poet, a new section of his adventurous "translation" of the *Iliad*.

■ **NEW FICTION** includes "Shame," by Joyce Carol Oates, author of the perceptive novel *Garden of Earthly Delights*, and "Twin Bed Bridge," a pungent, highly stylized portrayal of the troubled wife of a political activist, by Florence Hecht.

■ **THE AEROSPACE BONUS BOYS** bring back Bob (Elliott) and Ray (Goulding) for their once-postponed second appearance, an event as hilarious as their first venture into the world of computers in the *Atlantic* last November.

■ **ALFRED KAZIN** examines the state of contemporary American storytelling.

■ **JOE BANANAS** and his short, disappointed life with a thoroughbred comes into our ken via the pen of Sam Toporoff.

tion and opinion" — it failed, through lack of focus and the presence of divisive minorities, to achieve its purpose. Mr. Wakefield excerpts only my criticism of one of these groups but omits the "thousands of decent, heartsick, and indignant Americans" I also mentioned as marching.

And why the gratuitous aspersion involved in putting "essayist and reporter" in quotes? Is this an inaccurate description of a professional journalist and a writer of several books of essays?

I have too much respect for Mr. Wakefield to suspect that personal bias made him single me out as a hippie-baiter, an Establishmentarian, and a phony. But perhaps he can be accused of stacking the cards.

MARYA MANNES
New York City

SIR: Dan Wakefield's piece was nice. Now I can laugh as I cry as I weep as I die as I lie as I lie beneath the superbird.

DAN SCHAAF
Michigan City, Ind.

More on civil disobedience

SIR: Charles E. Wyzanski, Jr.'s article, "On Civil Disobedience" (February *Atlantic*), seriously confuses civil disobedience with conscientious objection.

Civil disobedience is a form of political action taken when the normal legal modes of political change seem to be inadequate. The point is not merely to disobey the law because it is wrong, but also to do it as a means of protesting and changing the law. The validity of such nonviolent but illegal modes of political change must be evaluated in terms of their consequences. Judge Wyzanski has given us a thoughtful discussion of these consequences.

The basis of disobeying a law for reasons of conscience is not political (an attempt to change the law) but a refusal to perform acts deemed evil even if the state ordains it. While no doubt conscience may err, the United States in its attitude toward conscientious objection to war recognizes that the harm of forcing a man to act against his conscience outweighs whatever benefits society may gain from his obeying the law. In the precedent established at Nuremberg, the positive duty of disobeying laws that are

wrong seems to be affirmed. Thus the grounds for judging the validity of disobeying the law on grounds of conscience are quite different from those relevant to the question of disobedience as a political tool, though on occasion the resulting actions may be similar.

This distinction has obvious relevance in evaluating the actions of those opposed to American involvement in Vietnam.

ALAN F. GETTNER
Department of Philosophy
Columbia University
New York City

SIR: Judge Wyzanski says that one should bide one's time (to protest) "until he personally is faced with an order requiring him as an individual to do a wrongful act." Well, we face a tax form every year, and it is that money which pays for the war. Is it all right, then, not to pay? Or are we to wait for the order to personally kill Vietnamese — a prescription which frees us all from responsibility, all except the soldiers who would face courts-martial for refusing to fight?

DAN FRAENKEL
Boston, Mass.

SIR: Judge Wyzanski's article reveals a sensitive, perceptive person who has obviously given a great deal of thought to the issue of civil disobedience. But for all his reasonableness, Judge Wyzanski counsels inaction, for he knows full well that there are indeed few of us who will ever face our "heroic" moment when civil disobedience is "compelled." The vast majority of *Atlantic* readers might comfortably live out this war and their days without ever having to confront such a moment. Restraint and compulsion then are not the issue. In the three or four years in which men of sensitivity and intelligence have encouraged and exercised restraint, countless men, women, and children have died because of American intervention in Vietnam. Sixteen thousand American servicemen, most of whom could not have cared less about this kind of debate, have died in Vietnam.

And while Judge Wyzanski continues to collect his pay from his government, his government is bombing villages and napalming civilians. The judge, who may not — in fact, cannot — find such activities a suf-

ficient justification for civil disobedience, has merely provided an increasingly uncomfortable middle-class readership with another, albeit articulate, excuse for refusing to confront the issue, and instead, to wait for the "heroic" moment of truth. These are the readers who must, along with Judge Wyzanski, face the moral imperatives posed by the Vietnam adventure, and reasonableness alone will not suffice, as long as such acts of savagery continue in the name of the United States.

J. DAVID COLFAX
Department of Sociology
University of Connecticut
Storrs, Conn.

SIR: Regarding the heretofore unpublished letter of Leo Tolstoy ("Advice to a Draftee," February *Atlantic*), I am intrigued by the editorial note accompanying it: that the recipient moved to another "country" to avoid conscription — from Darmstadt in Hesse to a small town in Bavaria. This was in 1899, long after Bismarck had unified Germany (1871). Both Bavaria and Hesse were then states of the German Empire. How could a draft-dodger hope to avoid his military commitment in this way?

JAMES J. PFLAUM
Dayton, Ohio

Advice and consent

SIR: James Watson's excellent articles on cracking the DNA code ("The Double Helix: The Discovery of the Structure of DNA," January and February *Atlantic*) were discredited by Robert L. Sinsheimer in a letter to the editor which appeared in the March *Atlantic*. Sinsheimer intimates that personalities and personality conflicts are of little importance to a scientist's work. He paradoxically expressed surprise "at the apparent innocence of the chemical information then available about DNA."

Since Dr. Sinsheimer is one of the team that recently announced the laboratory creation of active DNA and, thus, an important personality in the field of DNA research, it seems curiously ironic that he would write a letter which illustrates Watson's observations on the personalities of scientists.

E. CHRISTIAN
Department of Biological Sciences
Sacramento State College
Sacramento, Calif.



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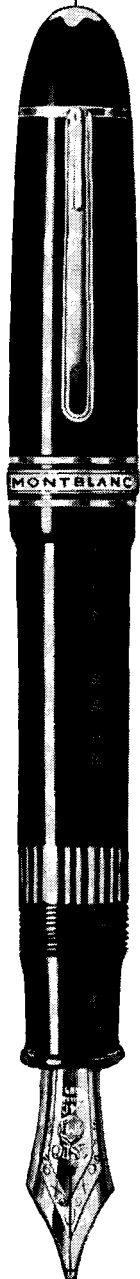
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SIR: I want to call attention to an error made by Kevin D'Arcy in his report, Wales and Scotland, in the *March Atlantic*.

Mr. D'Arcy says, "The islands of Guernsey, Jersey, and Alderney have as often been French as British, and are now in a state of independence similar to that of Northern Ireland, but without any men at Westminster."

The Channel Isles have been subject to the English Crown continuously since 1066. They do not send representatives to the British Parliament because they are not subject to Parliament but are the direct possessions of the English Crown as the last of its Norman territories.

ELSIE L. JOHNSTONE
Inverness, Calif.

SIR: James C. Thomson, Jr.'s "How Could Vietnam Happen?" (*April Atlantic*) is the finest political article to appear in any magazine in years.

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass.

SIR: Well, Brigid Brophy certainly opened my eyes ("The Perversity of Aubrey Beardsley, February *Atlantic*"). Here all along I've thought that Beardsley, like many another Victorian, simply had a thing for the rococo with which the period dripped. But now it seems that those tassels in the *Rue Morgue* illustration were not examples of the ubiquitous fringe. And that is not simply a standard Victorian frame around the cover piece for *The Rape of the Lock*; it is silhouettes of nude females (with unusually low bottoms—has Miss Brophy noticed?). Those precise, light vertical lines which had looked so innocent a tool of design—here they are speaking of a mother fixation. Candles and candle flames are phallic in one direction, and curved lines in another. Well, so much for Beardsley; now that we know how to read his real message, we need not err again. But what about other Victorian illustrators? What, for example, about Beatrix Potter? It takes only a perceptive glance at *The Tale of Peter the Rabbit* to suggest that this is no mere one-level story for kiddies.

To begin with, Peter and his siblings, all female, live with their mother in a hole. (Their father had previously met a particularly hu-

miliating end at the hands of a woman.) The first illustration showing Peter and the others out of the hole has them all, save the mother, naked from the hips down. Their tail hair is prominent. When Peter's female siblings (in Miss Potter's words "who were good little bunnies") go out to enjoy themselves, they gather blackberries—round little objects, full of seeds. Peter, on the other hand, heads for delights already forbidden to him: Mr. McGregor's garden. To gain access to this garden (surely a significant word), he has to compress his body and squeeze through a small opening, symbolism which needs no laboring. Then, in the garden, notice what he seeks: first lettuce and then both radishes and beans. After this excursion into ambivalence, he feels, we are told, rather sick—an almost classic manifestation of guilt.

The real drama of the piece, however, is yet to come—Peter's prolonged chase by Mr. McGregor, a dark account of the attractive younger male's pursuit by the relentless older one. During this pursuit Peter loses both his shoes and finally only escapes by stripping off his jacket and reducing himself to nakedness. That Mr. McGregor is not without an appreciation of fetishism we learn from his hanging these clothes shed during the pursuit on a form in his garden.

There is one other disturbing note. The jacket and shoes Peter lost at Mr. McGregor's are the second set in two weeks! Fatherless, mother-ridden, with no peer relationship but a possibly incestuous one, already he has established a pattern. We can only be grateful to Miss Potter for ending the book without showing us where it must certainly lead. We can hardly hope that Miss Brophy, if she turns her interest there, will treat us as gently.

MARY MCSHERRY MARKER
Bloomfield Hills, Mich.

The ATLANTIC welcomes communications from its readers, but can rarely accommodate letters in excess of 500 words. Light editing, for style and economy, is the rule rather than the exception, and we assume that any letter, unless otherwise stipulated, is free for publication in our monthly letters column.



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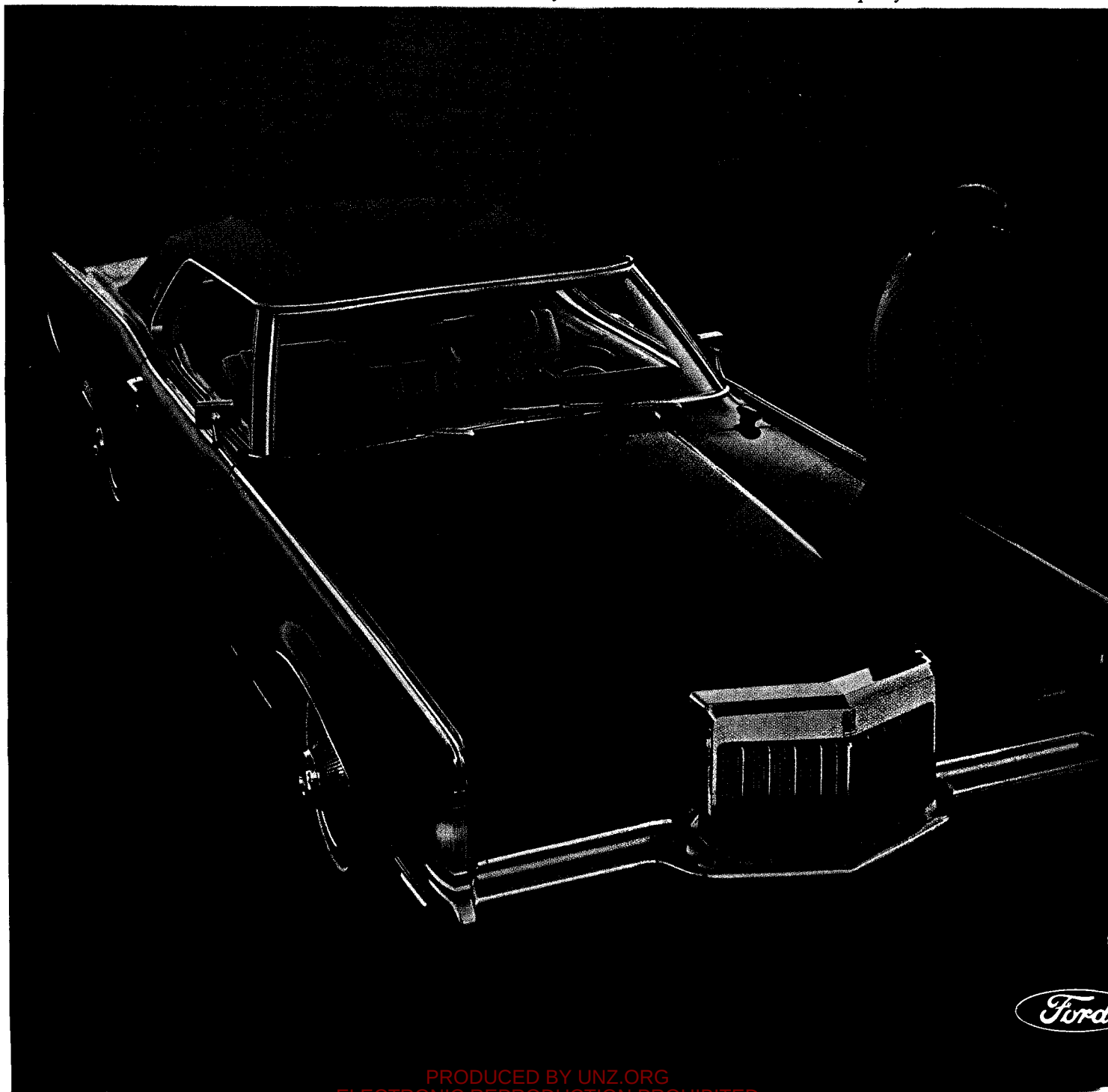
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FREEDOM: WHO NEEDS IT?

BY RICHARD ROVERE

What has happened to the idea of freedom in the United States? A lot that is not good, the eminent writer and NEW YORKER correspondent Richard Rovere believes. Especially among the young and supposedly radical thinkers, impetuous verbiage obscures a disregard verging on contempt for the basic individual liberties. Mr. Rovere's newest book (his seventh), WAIST DEEP IN THE BIG MUDDY, has just been published by Atlantic-Little, Brown.

INDIVIDUALITY is the aim of political liberty," James Fenimore Cooper wrote in 1838, in *The American Democrat*, and a decade later, in his *Civil Disobedience*, Henry David Thoreau insisted that "there will never be a really free and enlightened state until the state comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its power and authority are derived, and treats him accordingly."

How wrong — how mistaken in prophecy — our American moralists have been! Had Cooper and Thoreau been right, the Great Society would be all around us, its every member happy and fulfilled. There would be no civil disorder, and of course no war in Vietnam. "Alienation" might be a legal and pathological term — but not a widespread social phenomenon and the fundamental "issue" in the presidential campaign of one aspirant, Senator Eugene McCarthy. Civility would prevail, and, the state having long since accommodated itself to the examined consciences of "individuals," there would be no point to the kind of civil disobedience to which Thoreau felt driven by the Mexican War. Thoreau was an eloquent man, a noble spirit in a mean time, but his logic was often flawed, and it was his proposition — one wonders if he could actually have believed it — that if the state liberated the individual, the individual would

liberate the state, and everything would be just fine. Jefferson and Toqueville knew better, but they had known more of the world than Concord and did not think that all truth was contained in "the mind and heart of me."

It seems not to have dawned on Thoreau that the social whole might be something greater than — or at least something quite different from — the sum of its parts. With his view of man and the state, he would have had a hard time understanding what has happened in this republic in the century since his death, which is that the state has come to behave toward the individual pretty much as he thought it should but that it is still, alas, given to folly and wickedness, still very much in need of "enlightenment."

I am assuming that the individual *qua* individual (as distinct, be it clearly noted, from the individual as a member of the whole society or of any minority within it) has very little to complain about in the United States at the present time. Though a day may come, and before very long, when this will not be true, it seems to me clear beyond serious dispute that the liberties specified in the Bill of Rights are honored and in general vigorously upheld by the state. The government that Cooper distrusted and Thoreau despised imposes no effective limitations on speech or any other form of

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individual expression. I may say what I choose and disseminate it in any way I find possible, no matter how much offense I may give society in general or any of the groups that constitute it. In matters political, moral, and religious, my rights as an individual take precedence over any and every consensus of public opinion. I am seldom held to any test of factuality or damage. Indeed, the more powerful my adversary happens to be, the more unrestrained may I be in smiting him, for the courts have ruled that the bigger they are, the harder they may be hit. If I wish to proclaim my hatred and defiance of authority, constituted or otherwise, I can expect objection but not, as a rule, interference; should interference be attempted or proposed, I can demand and get the state's protection.

It may be objected that what I describe as rights and liberties are in fact privileges and immunities that are largely dependent on status — and, even at that, honored only in certain jurisdictions. Were I a black Mississippian not exercising but merely pleading for my “rights,” I might be speaking my last words on earth. As a white New Yorker denouncing authority in Mississippi, I might meet the same fate. Status is important in this society — in fact, in any society — and if I threaten that of another man in certain circumstances, I may lose my right to live. But if I lost it in such circumstances, I would have lost it to another individual, not to the state, even if the individual happened to be an agent of some provincial government. For the individual, equal protection is assured by the state that exercises national sovereignty. In England, in November, 1967, a Black Muslim named Michael Abdul Malik was given a year's imprisonment for what the sentencing judge called “attempting to raise hostility” against white people — an offense under the Race Relations Act of 1965. A couple of weeks later, the London *Sunday Times* was fined \$12,000 and court costs for having printed an unflattering but accurate description of the same Malik in a picture caption while his case was *sub judice*. But in the United States, Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown, though they may encounter difficulties over passport regulations and statutes dealing with the possession of firearms, are as free as any benighted honky to preach hatred and incite others to civil disorder, and a journalist is free to use any language he chooses in describing them.

IS THE individual as free to *do* what he wants as well as *say* what he wants? Of course not. No society can protect anyone's rights without a criminal code. However, my freedom of action is probably greater than any that has ever before

existed in an organized society. I can adopt any style of living that does not interfere with the right of others to do the same. There are no limits to my freedom of association except the possible reluctance of others to associate with me. There are almost no remaining constraints on sexual activity between consenting adults. In recent years, there has been established a right unnamed and unclaimed seventy-five years ago — the right to privacy. The right to withhold support from and participation in certain undertakings of the state, such as war, no doubt falls short of what Thoreau wished, but it is vastly broader than it was in his day. Conscientious objection to military service is reported under a steadily broadening definition of “conscience,” and it is conceivable that the courts will one day extend a similar respect to the kind of tax-withholding for which Thoreau spent a night in Concord jail. In ways too numerous to cite, the state has yielded to Thoreau's smug assertion that “any man more right than his neighbors constitutes a majority of one already.”

The political order may accord liberties to the individual which the social or economic order may be said to nullify or to diminish in value. As the Marxists used to say, what good is freedom of the press to anyone who does not own a press? A man has to have a home before he can call it his castle. But to repeat, the early libertarians regarded the state — the central, sovereign state — as their antagonist and did not distinguish it from the social and economic orders. Their conflict was with government, and by all the measures most of them employed, the victory is already theirs. Furthermore, when the conflict has been with oppressive social and economic power, the state has as often as not been the ally of the abused individual. Thoreau's conditions for a “free and enlightened state” have been achieved.

Yet never in our history has the individual seemed as wretched and despairing as he is today; and seldom have free men anywhere felt so thwarted and powerless in their relations to government democratically chosen. I speak particularly, but by no means exclusively, of those who have sought and in some measure achieved “individuality.” The conformists seem hardly less in revolt than the nonconformists. Never have disaffection, alienation, and frustration been more widespread. And, what is the most alarming thing of all, never has the kind of liberty the libertarians valued so greatly been held in such low esteem by those who possess and use it. Thoreau's hope for the redemption of the state was, of course, absurd. Liberty does not create enlightenment; it merely brings it within the realm of the possible. But at least one might suppose that liberty would be valued for its own sake and be seen by the indi-

vidual as one means for building a society that would be somewhat closer to his heart's desire.

It is clear in 1968 that one can suppose no such thing. There now seems to be something new under the American sun — a disenchantment not only with the society in which individual liberty thrives as it seldom has in the past but with the idea of liberty itself. In a survey of attitudes among liberal and radical college students and teachers late in 1967, Nan Robertson, of the *New York Times*, found that those who have the most grandiose and in some ways the most humane visions of a different, better America place little value on their constitutional rights. "The most radical among them displayed total scorn for individual liberties," Miss Robertson reported. Nor, evidently, is this contempt limited to the very young, who — lacking much acquaintance with, to say nothing of respect for, history — take freedom very much for granted. Mary McCarthy, a writer with a richly informed sense of the past and an honorable record of libertarian activity, has lately described "freedom in the United States . . . simply as the right to self-expression, as in the dance, psychodrama, be-ins, kinky sex, and baking ceramics."

The disillusionment of the radical students and of such of their elders as Miss McCarthy has its origins — as what does not in this country today? — in the war in Vietnam. What they have all discovered, though it is hard to believe that Miss McCarthy did not know it all along, is that the war cannot be stopped by the individual's exercise of liberty. Miss McCarthy was quite explicit about this: "The uselessness of free institutions, pleasurable in themselves, to interpose any check on a war of this character, opposed, though not enough, by most so-called thinking persons, suggests that freedom . . . is no longer a political value." By "value" she means, I am sure, "weapon," or, better perhaps, "force." Certainly this is what Dwight Macdonald means when he explains that he took up "resistance" in the summer of 1967, when "it became evident to me that two years of writing, speaking, and demonstrating against the war had not got through to our President." (Macdonald is a man of awesome ingenuousness. He has been writing, speaking, and demonstrating for thirty-five years, through five presidencies, without, so far as is known, "getting through" to a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Anything. He must have rated Johnson as an especially quick study.)

The bitter truth is that we cannot use our liberty or our individuality to make the President cease and desist in Vietnam. Indeed, when we try, he insists on telling us that he is doing it all so that we can hold on to our right to dissent. Under the circumstances, the most we can do is vote against

him when the proper time comes and in the meanwhile try to persuade others to do the same. This kind of activity, however, we undertake not really as individuals, as right-minded majorities of one, but as fragments of society.

I HAVE suggested that there is something new to American experience in this disenchantment with individual liberty. I think it is without precedent. But I also think I detect a common element in the attitudes of Thoreau and Mary McCarthy. Neither is willing to accept liberty as an end in itself. The classic libertarian position, one has always supposed, is that the whole point of the struggle is to get the state off one's back — to achieve individuality, as Cooper said, and to achieve it for exactly the purpose Miss McCarthy scorns, "self-expression." Kinky sex and ceramics could be part of it, as well as a man's right to hold and proclaim his own vision of God or of beauty. The idea was not to control the state, but to avoid being controlled by it, so that the individual, as Cooper put it, "is left to pursue his means of happiness in his own manner." But Cooper was a conservative, a right-winger of sorts, while Thoreau and Mary McCarthy represent another tradition — that of "social conscience" and political reform. They ask the state not to leave them alone but to give them power, to let them be part of the life of the state and have a share in what nowadays is called "decision-making" — so that, as Thoreau professed to hope, that state could be made "free and enlightened," and as Miss McCarthy would have it, freedom could be used to "interpose a check" on the war in Vietnam.

It is easy enough to say that they are mistaken as to the nature and value of individual liberty and have even turned inside out the classic defenses of it. But one is then compelled to ask if these arguments were ever themselves reasonable and honest. Has the desire for freedom ever been only a desire for self-expression or self-fulfillment? The great appeals for liberty have often stated the case in these terms — "Give *me* liberty or give *me* death" — but while there have been some valorous and lonely battles waged by individuals, the great crusades for liberty were collective undertakings (not for "me" but for "us") in which the aim was a collective liberation. Not many of those who have fought for liberty, if only in some bloodless demonstration against oppressive authority, have themselves had much to gain from destroying censorship or establishing the right to free scientific inquiry. No doubt there are in every society a few people who have faith, justified or otherwise, in their individual ability to create something of value or to uncover

some hidden truth about the world and ask nothing of their fellowman but noninterference. But, as the cases of Henry Thoreau and Mary McCarthy so amply demonstrate, even among the most gifted there can be so powerful a yen to change the world that a devaluation of freedom seems called for when it develops that free speech and free thinking and free love are not particularly effective instruments of change. And among the less gifted, those who are incapable of using liberty in a solitary pursuit of truth or beauty, disillusionment is bound to be commensurately greater. Eric Hoffer long ago pointed out that mass movements are built and staffed by "uncreative men of words."

And so it may be idle, even stuffy and pedantic, to point out that some Americans have misconstrued the nature of liberty and that they ask for more than can reasonably be expected of it. If this is a species of irrationality, it is only one of several that are to be found in this country today. To confront one's contemporaries with the ideals of the founders and early ideologues may be as irrelevant as attributing to the founders the present maladies of the nation they established. The fact is that the society in which we live is not the one the founders intended it to be or the one the ideologues hoped it would someday become. In it, the individual has a wide range of liberties and, thanks mainly to its affluence, a wide range of opportunities for self-fulfillment. But, as John Kenneth Galbraith has written, "the presumption of this society is no longer individualist but collectivist." He might have added that this is no recent development. Ours is a mass society in which ideas get lost or diluted or distorted in consensus — and this is not a word that Lyndon Johnson invented or gave currency to but one that Theodore Roosevelt selected as descriptive of the way it is in our political system. Universal education, perhaps the most distinctive of our institutions, created not a nation of individualists but a literate mass that formed itself into a market for mass culture and consensus politics.

IT was doubtless inevitable — that is to say, predictable — that there would be extraordinary tensions between the free individual and the free but generally unresponsive society. For freedom and individuality are not sweet but galling when they cannot be put to good use, which for most men means some power to control events. This side of the New Jerusalem, there will always be a reformer of sorts dwelling in every sentient being. Each of us wishes that the mass would adopt at least some of our values, and some of us want a good deal more than reform. "Quite simply, I want a new civiliza-

tion," said Ezra Pound, who went mad from wanting.

A classic instance of how galling a powerless freedom can be is to be found in the memoirs of George Kennan, perhaps the most brilliant diplomat of the century. Kennan entered the Foreign Service of the United States in 1925, and the government paid for an education that put him on the road to becoming our leading authority on Soviet affairs and about as well informed as anyone else on Germany and Eastern Europe. From the late twenties down to the end of the forties, he provided Washington with interpretations of men and events that can, in hindsight, be seen to have been almost spectacularly accurate. What use did his government make of the talent it had so wisely developed and of the analyses that might have saved it so much grief? Not until the very end of his career did his superiors — the ambassadors and Secretaries of State and Presidents he had served — trouble to listen to him.

In his memoirs are dozens of memoranda drawn from his and the Department's files; though some were written more than thirty years ago, they make compelling reading today. Had they been read upon receipt by those to whom they were addressed, this essay might bear happier tidings than it does. But many of them, in all probability, were never read by anyone before they were published by Kennan himself and, ironically, given mass distribution by the Book-of-the-Month Club. Though he is by temperament anything but a whiner, Kennan, as an autobiographer, is an aggrieved chronicler of rejection and of a frustration so deep that, having "no reason to believe that my views would be interesting or welcome in official Washington," toward the end he almost gave up trying; and, in the end, even after a brief period of belated recognition, he got out, hoping that he would have more impact on events by the writing of history than by writing policy recommendations that policy-makers never read. Out of public life, he has contributed much to enlightenment but discouragingly little to public policy.

George Kennan was not ignored because his views were radical — they were anything but that; he wanted no new civilization — or because he was held in low esteem. It would be closer to the truth to say that he was ignored because his views were complex, and despite the exemplary lucidity of the prose in which they were couched, not easily grasped. The views that Kennan advanced were those of an *individual*, an Emersonian Man Thinking — thinking as hard as he possibly could, thinking his way through illusions to what he perceived as reality. His views could seldom be reduced to slogans; indeed, they often ran counter to the slogans currently in vogue and obscuring hard

truth. The consensus could not accommodate them.

We are, as I see it, in this fix: ours is probably the only kind of society which can liberate the individual, and it is at the same time a society in which he is less likely to find fulfillment than he might under certain kinds of authoritarian rule. Dissent is tolerated and at times encouraged, but unless and until it is organized on a mass scale — developing in the process a new orthodoxy, and inevitably, a new dissent — it is not more likely to influence events than it would be in the Soviet Union. Like the rich man with his money, the free individual learns that freedom cannot buy happiness. He suffers anxieties of a kind he would not know in a totalitarian country, where the notion that a few scattered voices might change national policy could no more take hold than the notion that a local astronomy club could send a rocket to Venus. The anxieties may be endurable when he differs with the society over matters that he regards as being at least debatable and subject to compromise; they become unendurable when he persuades himself that because of his powerlessness men and women in large numbers are dying in hideous ways each hour of every day.

When the failure to prevail through freedom becomes thus unendurable, it is only, one supposes, a short step to a renunciation of freedom itself. This would be particularly the case in a country in which not even the oldest citizens can recall a time when the individual *qua* individual was subject to the more severe forms of repression. In our time, the civil rights movement and the labor movement have had their martyrs, but even when Joseph McCarthy flourished, no one lost his life as a fighter for the freedom of the individual. (Some may say there were losses no less grave, and this may be true, but the sufferers who live in memory are those who have died or at least bled for a cause.) A right that has long been secured is less prized, and more easily despised, than a right won in our own or our father's time.

It is not, then, difficult to see how in this worst of American times, some of the young and some of the not so young can, as Miss Robertson put it, display "total scorn for individual liberties." But to understand is not to pardon. If individual liberties are held in contempt simply because they produce no quick political results, liberty of all kinds will be in jeopardy. Of course Dwight Macdonald cannot talk or write the President of the United States out of the war in two years. Nor can Stokely Carmichael create black power by extolling it before a thousand crowds.

The test of liberty can never be narrowly pragmatic. Freedom of expression does not assure greatness: it may, on the contrary, smother it in outpourings of mediocrity. But if for this or any other reason it is to be held in low esteem by those who wish to change society, they will soon enough find that the likeliest kind of change their attitude will promote is in the direction of reaction and regression.

We appear to have reached a point at which there can be no communication between the alienated and those who have, as I do, a continuing commitment not only to the professed ideals of this society, many of which are dishonored every day, but to its political and legal institutions. Alienation is not, I suppose, a point of view that can be dealt with by discourse of any kind. Still, it seems to me that those who are coming to perceive the limitations of liberty owe it to themselves to confront not only the disagreeable facts about those limitations but the facts, many of them no less disagreeable, about the nature of this society and its place in history and in the world.

Such a confrontation can be dispiriting indeed, for it can produce despair not only about American possibilities but about human possibilities in general. It must begin, I think, with an acknowledgment of the fact that the United States was born in a revolution led by men of uncommon intelligence and integrity, men whose ideals were of an elevation rare in the history of revolutions. They provided us with model charters of freedom and with a governmental structure that, whatever its defects, has been workable enough to endure for almost two centuries. They achieved a political unity that was in time, though not without strife, to become continental. The continent we claimed was enormously rich and fertile, and this made easier the maintenance of the liberties for which the charters provided. In the first century and a quarter of our national existence, we attracted from a Europe unable to achieve much in the way of either liberty or unity millions of settlers eager to share the opportunities our continent offered, and for the most part, eager to share our ideals. We enjoyed, in short, good fortune of a kind unknown in the past and unlikely to be known in the future. It is not, I think, chauvinistic to say that if in the end we prove unable to make a go of democracy, there is a fair presumption that no one else will be able to do so either.

The alienated feel that the evidence is already in, that we have compromised ourselves fatally, and that the role of the individual is either to destroy the society or drop out of it. In that case, if I am right, they must concede the futility of the very idea of human community and the fatuousness not only of change but of criticism. For myself, though

I have not known a time of greater anguish over our possibilities, I want this society to be preserved, and I hope for the strength to maintain my own commitment to it. Despite the horror of Vietnam, despite the squalor and hopelessness to which we have condemned generation after generation of Negro Americans, despite the vulgarity of much of our culture, we have, I think, done much to keep hope alive in this world. Until the Negro is fully franchised and represented, we cannot rebut those who are cynical about our democratic professions. Nevertheless, our history has been one of a steady extension and strengthening of the democratic procedures — and this extension continues in this period. The rule of law has likewise been extended and strengthened, more in the last decade than in any period in the past. Though our economy can fairly be described as exploitative, we have, by the exercise of democracy on behalf of equality and of compassion, compelled it to distribute the product of our agriculture and technology more equitably than many countries which claim to have institutionalized economic egalitarianism have distributed their products.

As for our failures, they seem to me — to use a phrase expressive of some of our shabbier values — about par for the course. The war in Vietnam is a monstrous miscarriage of a foreign policy that may very well have been ill-conceived to begin with, but I do not think it morally more odious than similar undertakings on the part of other great powers, most notably and most recently, the French in Indochina and Algeria, who now censure us. Among the alienated, it is terribly fashionable now to say that ours is a “racist” society. Of course it is. I should like to know of an organized society anywhere of which this cannot be said. I have yet to visit a country in which the dominant minority, even where it is physically indistinguishable from any of its majorities, is not persuaded of its own innate superiority. I think it far less remarkable that we can be accurately described as racist than that we can be described as a people who have shown some eagerness to be free of this condition and have elected leaders and representatives committed to this form of liberation.

Though I have been writing here of “this society” as if it were an entity that the individual can sensibly be “for” or “against,” this way of approaching the problem has never made much sense to me. There are too many loose and loosely connected phenomena here, too many currents and cross-currents, too many forces in tension and contention, to speak of the whole thing as a machine in operation. There is plenty to be despised and rejected. There is much that stands in need of radical change

or of destruction. There is at the same time much to be defended and preserved, the liberty of the individual being to my mind the first of these because it is the most needed for the realization of any possibilities. The work of any sentient individual, of anyone interested in appraising the utility or inutility of freedom, would seem to me to be to cast a discriminating eye on the nation — not to determine whether it is good or bad but to associate these qualities with the specific values and institutions that come within his field of vision. His judgment will not be reflected in cease-and-desist orders from the President or rewarded by vast transformations of the economic order. But the exercise of liberty will be a defense of liberty, while its disparagement will surely lead to its atrophy and disappearance and to the end of any talk about human possibilities.

FLIGHT

BY GEORGE SULLIVAN

The word has a flesh
comes proud from the brow
Can round in the sun
like a peach on a bough
And the bird has a wing
swings
in space
on its own
blown
grace

The peach and word
are one in the sun
And one in the shade
of their windfall graves
For the word has a bone
pulls flesh in turn
As the stone the peach
to the wasp and worm

See the blur on the bough
is the bird
as it goes
and was gone

ON GIVING ONESELF A HOTFOOT GOVERNMENT BY COMMISSION

by Elizabeth B. Drew

Since the birth of the republic, Presidents have been appointing commissions to probe into various aspects of American life. What few citizens know, however, is that presidential commissions have been the subject of a probe themselves. The heretofore secret records of the Commission on Commission-Watching, leaked to our Washington reporter by the Stamps editor of the Washington POST, are here bared. It should be noted that Mrs. Drew's report does not encompass the most recent proposal for a presidential commission, the one said to be endorsed by the Robert Kennedy forces and to be established by President Johnson to investigate the President's own conduct of the Vietnam War. That deserves its own separate probe.

IN 1794, President Washington had a problem. Rebellious groups in Pennsylvania were threatening the nation with civil disorder. So he appointed a commission. "The report of the Commissioners," Mr. Washington informed the Congress in his sixth annual address later that year, "marks their firmness and abilities, and must unite all virtuous men."

Whether it did or not, or whether the President thought it would or even intended it to, is now lost to history. But the technique of appointing a special presidential commission, of which this was the country's first, to investigate, obfuscate, resolve, defuse, defer, detail, or derail a problem has become as much an instrument of the presidency as the State of the Union Message, the toss of the ball on opening day, or the review of troops in wartime. The fine art of commissionmanship enjoys an unusually flourishing state today. There is no official tally of how many presidential commissions are extant, but a casual inquiry shows that in the past year and a half there have been special presidential commissions on Health Manpower, Health Facilities, Rural Poverty, Food and Fiber, Civil Disorders, Insurance in Riot-Affected Areas, Urban Housing, Urban Problems, Income Maintenance, Crime (nationwide), Crime (in the District of Columbia), Criminal Laws, Libraries, the Post Office, the Selective Service, Budget Concepts, Federal Salaries, and the CIA.

There are several types of government commissions: permanent floating ones, such as the American Battle Monuments Commission, or the Cana-

dian-American Boundary Commission, which has been preventing an outbreak of war between the two nations; or so-called regulatory commissions, such as the Federal Communications or Interstate Commerce Commissions; commissions which Congress tells the President to establish, such as the Pornography Commission, also espoused by former Postmaster General Arthur Summerfield, who was so upset about the pornography that came through the mail that he kept a whole room full of it just off his office. There are also the not-so-secret task forces of inside and outside experts which President Johnson has been appointing each year to review federal activities.

But special presidential commissions are an institution unto themselves, so much so that not long ago a group of highly qualified Washington observers (of the stripe that the press frequently turns to for profound insights) formed a Commission on Commission-Watching. Because of internal problems, the report of the CCW has run into unforeseen delays. A comprehensive summary of its findings has been obtained from friendly sources, however, and it goes as follows.

THE USES OF COMMISSIONS

There are eight reasons, which are not mutually exclusive, for appointing a commission.

1. *To obtain the blessing of distinguished men for something you want to do anyway.* Thus, if you want to make the Post Office more "businesslike," appoint

a commission consisting largely of important businessmen whose concurrence might help persuade Congress to relax its grip on postal operations. A useful by-product might be that the commission would work out some of the difficult problems of making the Post Office more businesslike — which the Post Office itself never could do — but this could also be done through a consulting firm, which the Commission on Postal Operations has hired anyway.

2. *To postpone action, yet be justified in insisting that you are at work on the problem.* This is one of the most popular uses of commissions. The CCW believes that it largely explains the existence of the Commissions on Civil Disorders, Income Maintenance, the CIA, Health Facilities, among others. A guaranteed annual income has now been proposed or studied by one advisory council, one presidential commission, two government agencies, and three secret White House task forces. There are, however, two other possible reasons for the Income Maintenance Commission (see Reasons 3 and 8).

In 1965, Health, Education, and Welfare Department officials were saying that there was an urgent need to build or remodel urban hospitals and estimated that the cost would be \$6 billion to \$10 billion. In 1966, the Administration asked Congress for a \$5 billion program of guaranteed loans for urban hospitals. Mayors and hospital administrators condemned the plan as inadequate, it wasn't pushed very hard, and it got nowhere. Early in 1967 the President promised to appoint a commission to study the problem, described as "pressing" the year before, and seven months later he did. At this writing, the commission has met three times.

3. *To act as a lightning rod, drawing political heat away from the White House.* When the Selective Service Act was to expire in 1967, despite the fact that there had been a (secret) Pentagon study on the draft, it was useful to set up a presidential commission to deal with this politically sensitive subject. This set the terms of the debate at *how* the draft should be extended, not *whether* it should, or why we were in Vietnam; moreover, it permitted the President to pass along recommendations to Congress which were a commission's, not simply his own. The fact that Congress rejected almost all of the commission's recommendations, and brought off the singular achievement of making the draft system worse than it was before, does not negate the effectiveness of the lightning-rod device.

4. *To conduct an extensive study of something you do need to know more about before you act, in case you do.* Commission-watchers report that it is often difficult to distinguish between this and Reason 2 (deferral), but they are generally agreed that the latest crime commissions fall in this category. The National

Commission on Urban Problems — Codes, Zoning, Taxation, and Development Standards fits here, too, because of the highly technical nature of its assignment. Administration officials report, however, that the Urban Problems Commission is showing disturbing tendencies toward wanting to solve the urban crisis. (The 1931 Wickersham Commission report on crime grew out of national concern with a breakdown of law and order, which had become a political issue, and it was a landmark report. It analyzed court processes, the relationship between poverty and crime, police brutality, and other problems. A new Administration and other political issues came along, however, and it was largely unimplemented. There has been little implementation of the recent national crime commission report either, but commission sources say that they were writing for posterity, which was foresighted of them.)

5. *To investigate, lay to rest rumors, and convince the public of the validity of one particular set of facts.* The Warren Commission is the most outstanding example of this type of commission.

6. *To educate the commissioners, or get them aboard on something you want to do.* Many, perhaps most, commissions are indeed useful in this respect. They help overcome the insularity of businessmen. The Urban Housing Commission contains representatives of business and labor whose cooperation is needed for any breakthrough in building low-cost housing. The report of the Health Manpower Commission, one of the best and potentially most effective in the view of the CCW, carried the signature of Dr. Dwight Wilbur, the president-elect of the American Medical Association.

7. *Because you cannot think of anything else to do.* This is not to be confused with Reason 2. The origin of this type of commission is often a speech or a message to Congress in which it is necessary to lengthen the list of actions you say you are taking on a problem. The CCW understands that this was the origin of the Rural Poverty Commission.

8. *To change the hearts and minds of men.* This is one of the most frequently cited yet elusive uses of a commission. It is said to be a reason for, among others, the Disorders and Income Maintenance Commissions. It has also been the basis for the numerous blue-ribbon commissions on foreign aid. The theory is that a commission generates press copy and speeches, and that a certain number of people will decide that if, say, John McCone or I. W. Abel says it is so, it must be so, thus spreading the acceptance of an idea. There are two problems with this theory, however. One is that it can backfire. To stem rising congressional opposition to foreign aid, for example, President Kennedy created the Committee to Strengthen the Security of the Free World, by one count the thirteenth blue-ribbon

commission on foreign aid since the program was started in 1945. It was headed by retired General Lucius D. Clay and stocked with a number of respectables. The Clay committee, however, looked over the aid program and wasn't all that enthusiastic about what it saw. Its report, issued in 1963, said the program was trying to do "too much for too many." In desperation, the President pared his own request, but nonetheless the program met with the greatest disaster in its existence at the hands of Congress that year.

The second problem with the "hearts and minds" theory is that there is scant historical evidence that it works. When reports on controversial subjects are issued, the usual result is that those who agree say that they knew it all along, and those who do not say that the report is unwise, that it wasn't thought through. There have now been at least five reports on the causes of riots, all of which came to similar conclusions about the need to improve conditions for Negroes.

The history of commissions indicates that they are most effective when they deal with a discrete problem, such as a special governmental organization question, or when they call for change within a delimited discipline, such as the medical profession. They are least effective when their scope is broad, when the problem they are dealing with lies within the political system itself (as the disorders problem does), or when the political leadership is disinclined to act. The greater and more complex the problem, the less effective the commission, in itself, can be. In fairly short order most reports become footnote material. Thus there were forces within the Disorders Commission staff who argued for continual televised hearings, to spread the impact of what the commission was, once again, finding out. But the commission itself rejected the idea, on the grounds it might start trouble. They said it might cause riots.

HOW TO CHOOSE A COMMISSION

Over the years, there has developed an informal set of guidelines for selecting commission members, and they are important for both commission-appointers and commission-watchers to understand.

1. *Neither commissioners nor staff should be controversial.* In many situations, it is also important to rule out commissioners or staff who are "committed" to a particular solution of a problem. This procedure was largely followed in the selection of the Income Maintenance and Disorders Commissions. Since a great many people will be controversial in the eyes of someone, the search for a noncontroversial commission can be difficult, but with effort some commissioners can be found about whom no one has any point of view at all.

2. *Commissioners should be bipartisan and otherwise representative of constituent groups, as long as they are respectable.* This assures both a variety of points of view (within limits) and built-in checks and balances. An ideal commission will be composed of at least one business mogul, labor union president, Negro, woman (Negro women are excellent commission choices), publisher, university president, Italian, Mexican-American (the latest addition to the ideal-commission list), and White House "plant." The latter is a former employee or a friend of the President's, and his role is to watch the commission closely, and occasionally to say things like: "This would cause the President a great deal of political trouble, and we wouldn't want to do that, would we?" Among the friends and former associates of the President who have served on commissions are George Reedy (Income Maintenance, Selective Service), Warren Woodward, a vice president of American Airlines (Selective Service), and Leon Jaworski, a Texas lawyer (Crime). Not all former employees are useful commission members, however. Thus, while former press secretary Reedy has been called upon to serve, former press secretary Bill D. Moyers, long suspected of Kennedy tendencies, has not.

Negroes are a particular problem, because of the noncontroversialness principle. Roy Wilkins and Whitney Young can serve only so often. Attempts to bring the more militant aboard have not been notably successful. Floyd McKissick, for example, served on the Council of the White House Conference on Civil Rights and then charged that the conference itself was rigged, a serious breach of the rules of commissionmanship. Negro businessmen will do, and hopefully not too many Negroes on welfare will wonder why Asa T. Spaulding, an insurance millionaire, is on the Income Maintenance Commission, and George Wiley, head of the welfare rights movement, is not.

3. *The chairman should be able, and safe, but better safe than able.* Though some wondered about the independence of a Crime Commission headed by the Attorney General, Nicholas Katzenbach met both qualifications quite well. So has Ben Heine-man, a Chicago businessman, who has been chairman of the Council of the Civil Rights Conference and of a White House task force, and now heads the Income Maintenance Commission. Illinois Governor Otto Kerner, chairman of the Disorders Commission, was safe. Mr. Kerner had the further benefit of helping to maintain harmony with Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, Kerner's patron. (It should go without saying that appointments to commissions are useful devices for strengthening political ties or paying political debts.)

Commissioners tend to take very seriously the fact that the President has sought their wise counsel,

and they assume that their recommendations are eagerly awaited; but if chosen carefully, the commission will not create difficulties for the appointer, whatever action he takes on its proposals. This singular detachment from the fate of their efforts is a phenomenon which the CCW had some difficulty understanding. It was explained to them, however, that people who serve on commissions enjoy the sense of "in-ness" that commission service brings, and, furthermore, that businessmen and university presidents have too many dealings with the government to want to risk the wrath of the White House, no matter who is its occupant. While the latter explanation struck the CCW as touching on paranoia, several commissioners insisted that this stemmed from a real, not an imagined, threat.

A study of the rosters of recently appointed commissions tends to confirm the widely held theory that there are only forty-seven people in the whole world. The CCW is, in fact, considering the presentation of special awards for recent commission service. If so, based on its research thus far, the most-frequent-service awards would go to George Meany and businessman J. Irwin Miller, each of whom has served on three commissions in the last year and a half. Based on attendance and hard work, the best-commissioner award would be divided among Miller, Whitney Young, Kermit Gordon, president of the Brookings Institution, and Henry Rowen, president of RAND. It is understood that the leading candidate for worst-commissioner award, similarly based on attendance and attention to the work of the commission, is Meany. The CCW is considering a special commendation for Senator Edward Brooke, a member of the Disorders Commission, who missed some crucial meetings because he took a trip to Africa, in his capacity, his office announced, as a member of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee.

THE PROCESS OF COMMISSIONMANSHIP

Once a commission has been appointed and begins its work, certain procedures are followed.

1. *The staff does most of the work.* When Edward Jay Epstein, author of *Inquest*, wrote of this horrible discovery about the Warren Commission, experienced commission-watchers yawned. Commissioners are, after all, busy people. This makes securing a good staff crucial, but it is difficult to find able people who are ready to drop everything to devote full time to a temporary commission job. Those who do usually have been persuaded that the contribution the commission will make to the national good makes it all worthwhile; most do not do it more than once.

2. *The relationship between the commission and the*

staff is usually one of mutual contempt. The staff is often composed of young, less experienced people who still think that the world can and should be changed; the commissioners know better. Moreover, commissioners are disinclined to indict politically important figures, or programs or agencies identified with the President who selected them. "Obviously," remarked someone with the Disorders Commission as its work was getting under way, "we're not going to pick on HUD" (the Department of Housing and Urban Development). A second point of friction stems from the fact that the commissioners, being important people, are not very interested in chewing things over with a lot of young staff members. They prefer memoranda. "Commissioners, by their very credentials," reports a former staff member of the Warren Commission, "are not prepared to admit the need to learn." So the policy alternatives go up from the staff, and the policy directives come down from the commission, and seldom do the twain meet, except in the person of the exhausted, whipsawed executive director.

3. *A high percentage of the work of the director or his deputy has nothing to do with the subject before the commission.* It is spent begging for money from government agencies, which have their own problems, and otherwise stretching the rules of government funding so that Congress need not be asked to appropriate money for commissions; cutting through civil service regulations so that the staff can be hired before the commission expires; arguing with the General Services Administration over office space and typewriters and with the Government Printing Office over how long it will take to print the report.

4. *In the writing of the report, each commission is likely to evidence certain syndromes:*

a. The this-is-not-going-to-be-another-book-that-gathers-dust-on-the-shelf syndrome. This usually shows up early in the commission process, when the commission and the staff agree that this one will be different.

b. The everybody-is-going-to-read-our-report syndrome. This comes just after the commission has sat down and done some hard thinking about the questions Whom are we writing for? Whom are we trying to reach? The politicians? The media? The people? Then it decides on the strategy of reaching all of them. This leads in turn to a desperate search for a great writer and in the end to a report hastily put together by committee.

c. The unanimous-report syndrome. Commissions frequently decide that it would be best not to confuse the nation with divided counsel. Since the commissioners usually *are* divided on important issues, this guarantees that a large number of these issues will be fudged.

Once the report of the Disorders Commission,

for example, got beyond the conclusion that the causes of riots lay with white attitudes and actions, it listed some proposals and then neatly avoided the central questions. When were these proposals to be carried out? Who had the responsibility for seeing that they were? Could the crisis, so forcefully stated, be met without discomfort to the haves? Should taxes be raised now, beyond the surtax sought by the President ("the major need is to generate new will — the will to tax ourselves to the extent necessary to meet the vital needs of the nation")? If, as the commission concluded, the problem is racism, what specific actions should be taken by specific institutions — the President, the Congress, the governors, the mayors, the unions, and others — to eliminate racist policies? In the true spirit of commissionmanship, the representatives of these institutions on the commission saw to it that the report eschewed finger-pointing.

5. *The theory that the commission is independent must be nurtured.* The press is helpful in this respect, since it usually focuses on whether the President read the report while it was being drafted. Naturally, this is as unlikely as it is irrelevant. It is a simple matter for the chairman or the executive director to keep a presidential assistant fully briefed, and to receive the assistant's reactions and "suggestions." It is preferable, however, that such exchanges not take place in the Sans Souci restaurant.

HOW TO HANDLE THE REPORT

One of the most serious problems with presidential commissions is that they do issue reports. This is of course the greatest drawback of commissions appointed in order to postpone action. Moreover, despite all the precautions taken in selecting the commission and following its deliberations closely, some commissions will nevertheless recommend something other than what the appointer wants to do. The CCW has ascertained several methods of dealing with this sort of problem.

1. *Hide for as long as possible, leaving the commission the choice of tossing the report over the White House fence or waiting until you are good and ready to receive it.* A number of commissions have found that the White House was not quite as anxious to receive their report as they had expected. One former commissioner reports: "There was a great ceremony with plaudits in the Rose Garden when our appointment was announced, and then at the end we couldn't find anybody to hand the damn report to."

It is always helpful, of course, to have the commissions report, as the Disorders and Urban Housing Commissions did, after one has made one's own proposals to Congress. In this way, the appointer is less in the posture of seeming to react, or not react, as the case may be. With luck, the

appointer is then in a position to give one of the handiest responses in case, despite all precautions, the commission's proposals do exceed his own, as some of the Disorders Commission's proposals did: the "Not me, Al" response (Don't look at me — I have proposed many of these things — your problem is with Congress).

2. *After receiving the report, postpone and play down its release.* The report of the Commission on Rural Poverty, a runaway commission, had been printed by September, 1967, but was not released until December. The White House explained that this was because (1) the chairman, Kentucky Governor Edward T. Breathitt, did not want the report released before last November's Kentucky elections, and then (2) because the poverty bill was in trouble in Congress. The report was released after a reporter stumbled on the fact that back in September an employee of the Government Printing Office had routinely sent several hundred copies to libraries, and they had been available all along.

Daniel Bell, a member of the National Commission on Technology, Automation, and Economic Progress, which reported in 1966, wrote in *The Public Interest* that the handling of his commission's report "was curious indeed." "At the end of Bill D. Moyers' regular press conference, the report was in fact released to the press, in desultory fashion, with no member of the Commission on hand to answer questions, and no prior advance notice to the press that the report would be forthcoming — an advance notice which is usually given when the White House wants its press corps to reserve space with its city editors about important stories." The report on Federal Salaries, submitted last year and recommending substantial pay raises for high government officials, never was released.

3. *Dissociate or denounce the report.* Three Administration officials interviewed by the CCW shrugged their shoulders and said, with striking similarity, of the Rural Poverty report that it was a "terrible" report, "it just calls for more and more."

4. *Hope that the public's interest in the problem has waned during the delays.* Thus, when the stories of CIA's financing the National Student Association and dummy foundations were causing a national furor early in 1967, the President appointed an interdepartmental committee which studied the problem and in turn recommended the appointment of a commission. One year later, the commission, headed by a busy Secretary of State, had had few meetings, and it appeared that the public as well as the commissioners themselves had largely lost interest in the whole matter.

5. If all else fails, there is one other method of handling a commission report that has proved quite workable over the years:

Ignore it.

SOREL'S UNFAMILIAR QUOTATIONS

This introduces a new *Atlantic* feature from the pen of Edward Sorel, the artist and caricaturist. From the worlds of politics, public affairs, diplomacy, academia, and entertainment, Mr. Sorel and the *Atlantic* editors will frequently pluck candidates for slightly irreverent enshrinement in these pages. Readers are invited to join in. For each unfamiliar quotation that strikes the fancies of the artist and the editors, the *Atlantic* will award a \$50 prize.



God is bread.



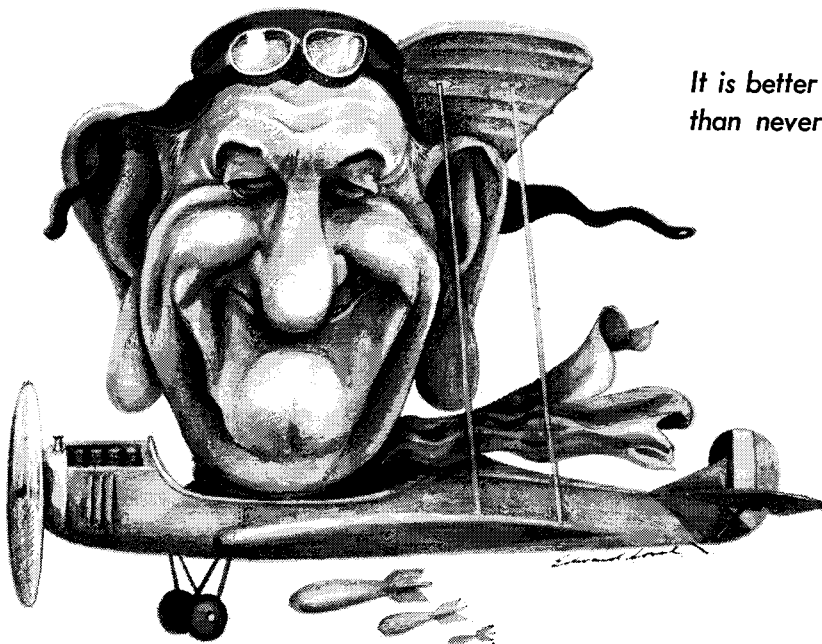
Opiate is the religion of the people.



Don't fire 'til you see the eyes of the whites.



I may not agree with what I have to say but I will defend to the death my right to say it.



It is better to have bombed and lost than never to have bombed at all.

Balthazar's Marvelous Afternoon

A Story by Gabriel García Márquez

THE cage was finished. Balthazar hung it under the eaves, from force of habit, and when he finished lunch everyone was already saying that it was the most beautiful cage in the world. So many people came to see it that a crowd formed in front of the house, and Balthazar had to take it down and close the shop.

"You have to shave," Ursula, his wife, told him: "You look like a Capuchin."

"It's bad to shave after lunch," said Balthazar.

He had two weeks' growth, short, hard, and bristly hair like the mane of a mule, and the general expression of a frightened boy. But it was a false expression. In February he had been thirty; he had been living with Ursula for four years, without marrying her and without having children, and life had given him many reasons to be on guard, but none to be frightened. He did not even know that for some people the cage he had just made was the most beautiful one in the world. For him, accustomed to making cages since childhood, that had hardly been any more difficult a job than the others.

"Then, rest for a while," said the woman. "With that beard you can't show yourself anywhere."

While he was resting, he had to get out of his hammock several times to show the cage to the neighbors. Ursula had not paid any attention to it until then. She was annoyed because her husband had neglected the work of his carpenter's shop to devote himself entirely to the cage, and for two weeks he had slept poorly, turning over, and muttering incoherencies, and hadn't thought of shaving. But her annoyance dissolved in the face of the finished cage. When Balthazar woke up from his nap, she had ironed his pants and a shirt; she had put them on a chair near the hammock, and had carried the cage to the dining table. She regarded it in silence.

"How much will you charge?" she asked.

"I don't know," Balthazar answered. "I'm going

to ask for thirty pesos to see if they'll give me twenty."

"Ask for fifty," said Ursula. "You've lost a lot of sleep in these two weeks. Furthermore, it's rather large. I think it's the biggest cage I've ever seen in my life."

Balthazar began to shave. "Do you think they'll give me fifty pesos?"

"That's nothing for Mr. Chepe Montiel, and the cage is worth it," said Ursula. "You should ask for sixty."

The house lay in a stifling shadow. It was the first week of April, and the heat seemed less bearable because of the chirping of the cicadas. When he finished dressing, Balthazar opened the door to the patio to cool off the house, and a group of children entered the dining room.

The news had spread. Doctor Octavio Giraldo, an old physician, happy with life but tired of his profession, thought about Balthazar's cage while he was eating lunch with his invalid wife. On the inside terrace, where they put the table on hot days, there were many flowerpots and two cages with canaries. His wife liked birds, and she liked them so much that she hated cats because they could eat them up. Thinking about her, Doctor Giraldo went to see a patient that afternoon, and when he returned he went by Balthazar's house to inspect the cage.

There were a lot of people in the dining room. On display on the table, the enormous dome of wire, with three stories inside, with passageways

García Márquez is a native of Colombia and a writer of considerable reputation among the new generation of Latin Americans. This story will appear in his collection NO ONE WRITES TO THE COLONEL AND OTHER STORIES, to be published next month by Harper & Row.

and compartments especially for eating and sleeping, and swings in the space set aside for the birds' recreation — it seemed like a small-scale model of a gigantic ice factory. The doctor inspected it carefully, without touching it, thinking that in effect the cage was better than its own reputation, and much more beautiful than any he had ever dreamed of for his wife.

"This is a flight of the imagination," he said. He sought out Balthazar among the group of people, and fixing his maternal eyes on him, added: "You would have been an extraordinary architect."

Balthazar blushed. "Thank you," he said.

"It's true," said the doctor. He was smoothly and delicately fat, like a woman who had been beautiful in her youth, and he had delicate hands. His voice seemed like that of a priest speaking Latin. "You wouldn't even need to put birds in it," he said, making the cage turn in front of the audience's eyes, as if he were auctioning it off. "It would be enough to hang it in the trees so it could sing by itself." He put it back on the table, thought a moment, looking at the cage, and said: "Fine, then I'll take it."

"It's sold," said Ursula.

"It belongs to the son of Mr. Chepe Montiel," said Balthazar. "He ordered it specially."

The doctor adopted a respectful attitude. "Did he give you the design?"

"No," said Balthazar. "He said he wanted a large cage, like this one, for a pair of troupials."

The doctor looked at the cage. "But this isn't for troupials."

"Of course it is, doctor," said Balthazar, approaching the table. The children surrounded him. "The measurements are carefully calculated," he said, pointing to the different compartments with his forefinger. Then he struck the dome with his knuckles, and the cage filled with resonant chords.

"It's the strongest wire you can find, and each joint is soldered outside and in," he said.

"It's even big enough for a parrot," interrupted one of the children.

"That it is," said Balthazar.

The doctor turned his head. "Fine, but he didn't give you the design," he said. "He gave you no exact specifications, aside from making it a cage big enough for troupials. Isn't that right?"

"That's right," said Balthazar.

"Then there's no problem," said the doctor. "One thing is a cage big enough for troupials, and another is this cage. There's no proof that this is the one you were asked to make."

"It's this very one," said Balthazar, confused. "That's why I made it."

The doctor made an impatient gesture.

"You could make another one," said Ursula,

looking at her husband. And then, to the doctor, "You're not in any hurry."

"I promised it to my wife for this afternoon," said the doctor.

"I'm very sorry, doctor," said Balthazar, "but I can't sell you something that's sold already."

The doctor shrugged his shoulders. Drying the sweat from his neck with a handkerchief, he contemplated the cage silently, with a fixed gaze that never quite seemed to come into focus, as one does when one looks at a ship which is sailing away.

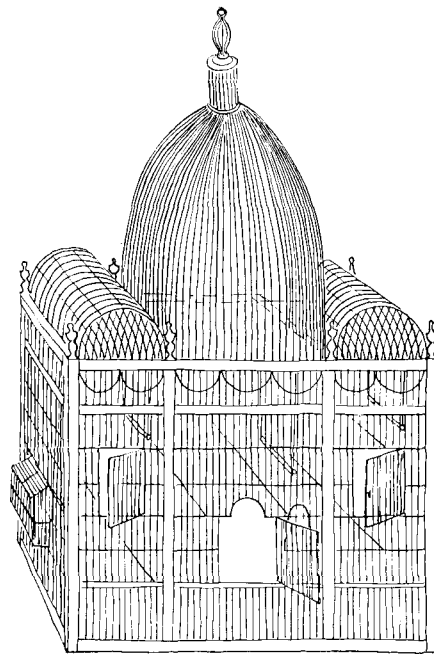
"How much did they pay you for it?"

Balthazar sought Ursula's eyes without replying.

"Sixty pesos," she said.

The doctor kept looking at the cage. "It's very pretty," he sighed. "Extremely pretty." Then, moving toward the door, he began to fan himself energetically, smiling, and the trace of that episode disappeared forever from his memory.

"Montiel is very rich," he said.



In truth, Jose Montiel was not as rich as he seemed, but he would have been capable of doing anything to become so. A few blocks away, in a house crammed with riding equipment, where no one had ever smelled a smell that couldn't be sold, he remained indifferent to the news of the cage. His wife, tortured by an obsession with death, closed the doors and windows after lunch and lay for two hours with her eyes opened to the shadow of the room, while Jose Montiel took his siesta. The clamor of many voices surprised her there. Then, she opened the door to the living room and found a crowd in front of the house, and Balthazar with the cage in the middle of the crowd, dressed in

white, freshly shaved, with that expression of decorous candor with which the poor approach the houses of the wealthy.

"What a marvelous thing," Jose Montiel's wife exclaimed, with a radiant expression, leading Balthazar inside. "I've never seen anything like it in my life," she said, and added, annoyed by the crowd which piled up at the door: "But bring it inside before they turn the living room into a grandstand."

Balthazar was no stranger to Jose Montiel's house. On different occasions, because of his skill and forthright way of dealing, he had been called in to do minor carpentry jobs. But he never felt at ease among the rich. He used to think about them, about their ugly and argumentative wives, about their tremendous surgical operations, and he always experienced a feeling of pity. When he entered their houses, he couldn't move without dragging his feet.

"Is Pepe home?" he asked.

He had put the cage on the dining room table.

"He's at school," said Jose Montiel's wife. "But he shouldn't be long," and she added: "Montiel is taking a bath."

In reality, Jose Montiel had not had time to bathe. He was giving himself an urgent alcohol rub, in order to come out and see what was going on. He was such a cautious man that he slept without an electric fan, so he could watch over the noises of the house while he slept.

"Adelaide," he shouted. "What's going on?"

"Come and see what a marvelous thing," his wife shouted.

Jose Montiel, obese and hairy, his towel draped around his neck, appeared at the bedroom window. "What is that?"

"Pepe's cage," said Balthazar.

His wife looked at him perplexedly. "Whose?"

"Pepe's," replied Balthazar. And then, turning toward Jose Montiel, "Pepe ordered it."

Nothing happened at that instant, but Balthazar felt as if someone had just opened the bathroom door on him. Jose Montiel came out of the bedroom in his underwear. "Pepe," he shouted.

"He's not back," whispered his wife, motionless.

Pepe appeared in the doorway. He was about twelve, and had the same curved eyelashes and was as quietly pathetic as his mother.

"Come here," Jose Montiel said to him. "Did you order this?"

The child lowered his head. Grabbing him by the hair, Jose Montiel forced him to look him in the eye. "Answer me."

The child bit his lip without replying.

"Montiel," whispered his wife.

Jose Montiel let the child go and turned toward Balthazar in a fury. "I'm very sorry, Balthazar,"

he said. "But you should have consulted me before going on. Only to you would it occur to contract with a minor." As he spoke, his face recovered its serenity. He lifted the cage without looking at it and gave it to Balthazar. "Take it away at once, and try to sell it to whomever you can," he said. "Above all, I beg you not to argue with me." He patted him on the back, and explained: "The doctor has forbidden me to get angry."

The child had remained motionless, without blinking, until Balthazar looked at him perplexedly, with the cage in his hand. Then Pepe emitted a guttural sound, like a dog's growl, and threw himself on the floor screaming.

Jose Montiel looked at him unmoved, while the mother tried to pacify him. "Don't even pick him up," he said. "Let him break his head on the floor, and then put salt and lemon on it so he can rage to his heart's content." The child was shrieking tearlessly, while his mother held him by the wrists.

"Leave him alone," Jose Montiel insisted.

Balthazar observed the child as he would have observed the death throes of a rabid animal. It was almost four o'clock. At that hour, at his house, Ursula was singing a very old song and cutting slices of onion.

"Pepe," said Balthazar.

He approached the child, smiling, and held the cage out to him. The child jumped up, embraced the cage, which was almost as big as he was, and stood looking at Balthazar through the wirework, without knowing what to say. He hadn't shed one tear.

"Balthazar," said Jose Montiel softly. "I told you already to take it away."

"Give it back," the woman ordered the child.

"Keep it," said Balthazar. And then, to Jose Montiel, "After all, that's what I made it for."

Jose Montiel followed him into the living room. "Don't be foolish, Balthazar," he was saying, blocking his path. "Take your piece of furniture home and don't be silly. I have no intention of paying you a cent."

"It doesn't matter," said Balthazar. "I made it expressly as a gift for Pepe. I didn't expect to charge anything for it."

As Balthazar made his way through the spectators who were blocking the door, Jose Montiel was shouting in the middle of the living room. He was very pale, and his eyes were beginning to get red. "Idiot!" he was shouting. "Take your trinket out of here. The last thing we need is for some nobody to give orders in my house. Son of a bitch."

In the pool hall, Balthazar was received with an ovation. Until that moment, he thought that he had made a better cage than the others, that he'd

had to give it to the son of Jose Montiel so he wouldn't keep crying, and that none of those things was particularly important. But then he realized that all of this had a certain importance for many people, and he felt a little excited.

"So, they gave you fifty pesos for the cage."

"Sixty," said Balthazar.

"Score one for you," someone said. "You're the only one who has managed to get that pile of money out of Mr. Chepe Montiel. We have to celebrate."

They bought him a beer, and Balthazar responded with a round for everybody. Since it was the first time he had ever been out drinking, by dusk he was completely drunk, and he was talking about a fabulous project of a thousand cages, at sixty pesos each, and then of a million cages, until he had sixty million pesos. "We have to make a lot of things to sell to the rich before they die," he was saying, blind drunk. "All of them are sick, and they're going to die. They're so screwed up they can't even get angry anymore." For two hours he was paying for the jukebox which played without interruption. Everybody toasted Baltha-

zar's health, good luck, and fortune, and the death of the rich, but at mealtime they left him alone in the pool hall.

Ursula had waited for him until eight, with a dish of fried meat covered with slices of onion. Someone told her that her husband was in the pool hall, delirious with happiness, buying beers for everyone, but she didn't believe it, because Balthazar had never gotten drunk. When she went to bed, almost at midnight, Balthazar was in a lighted room where there were little tables, each with four chairs, and an outdoor dance floor, where the plovers were walking around. His face was smeared with rouge, and since he couldn't take one more step, he thought he wanted to lie down with two women in the same bed. He had spent so much that he had had to leave his watch in pawn, with the promise to pay the next day. A moment later, spread-eagled in the street, he realized that his shoes were being taken off, but he didn't want to abandon the happiest dream of his life. The women who passed on their way to five o'clock Mass didn't dare look at him, thinking he was dead.

— Translated by J. S. Bernstein

EDWIN O'CONNOR

1918–1968

"I'm just interested in human beings," Ed O'Connor used to say. More than that, he loved human beings. And those who knew him loved him for his wit and warmth, for his very large talent, and above all, for his good and gentle nature. Boston became his spiritual home, and the *Atlantic*, we are proud to say, became his club. In the nine years of his free-lancing, when he supported himself as a newspaper critic of radio, counting every penny, his home was a furnished room on Marlborough Street — a few steps from our door. He formed the habit of dropping by on his return from breakfast and again before or after lunch. He would deliver a marvelous story with a mimicry that was devastating but never unkind, or shift his big frame into a brief soft-shoe to the humming of "Keep working, keep singing America!" Or he might rifle the stacks of books awaiting review, complaining about the low caliber of a new novel or urging attention to some new but yet to be celebrated young talent.

So Ed walked into our lives and into our hearts. The *Atlantic* meant to him what it did to us. We prized — came to rely on — his golden humor, his love for people of every sort, his integrity, and his simple decency in these days of self-indulgence and excess. Esteem, success, prizes came in abundance, but he never lost his modesty. When *The Last Hurrah* had won the Atlantic Prize contest and been selected by the Book-of-the-Month Club, and his days of penny-pinching were over, Ed sauntered into the office of one of our editors with a penny in his hand. "See this, Louise," he said, "this is what I care for money!" and he spun it out a window. She retrieved it and has it in her desk drawer still.

We mourn for his good wife, for his devoted stepson, and for ourselves. His death on March 23 at the age of forty-nine, with great work still to be done, was a death in this family.

— THE EDITOR



YOU CAN'T ACT WITHOUT GETTING YOUR HANDS DIRTY

by Jacques Ellul

"If you rule out dirty hands, don't you rule out politics?" This is one of several touchy questions confronted by Professor Ellul, who teaches the history of law and social history at the University of Bordeaux. His reputation, already strong in Europe, has grown in the United States with publication by Alfred Knopf of three of his books (THE TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY, 1964; PROPAGANDA, 1965; and THE POLITICAL ILLUSION, 1967). This essay is drawn from the new Ellul book, A CRITIQUE OF THE NEW COMMONPLACES, translated from the French by Helen Weaver, and scheduled by Knopf for publication in May.

THIS commonplace, which we may call "existentialist" because it was put into circulation by Sartre, is merely the literary form of the very vulgarly bourgeois expression "You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs." For this reason I would like to begin with what Léon Bloy said about this last commonplace, which was almost the order of the day: "It was with these words that that colossal bourgeois Stalin/Abdul Hamud must have explained to his good friend and faithful servant Sartre/Hanotaux the massacre of two or three hundred thousand Christians of Armenia (here let us say, to be modest, from two to three million Turcomans, Azerbaijani, Ukrainians, Balts, and Poles). However, he did not invite him to eat the omelette."

It is obvious that Péguy's celebrated remark about workers who have dirty hands and those "who have no hands at all" has become the basis for a shameless exploitation. If Péguy could see the use that is made of it he would be rather surprised, for it provides an excuse, a screen, and a bleach job for all those who delight in getting their hands into the political manure and worry very little and sometimes not at all (and for that matter would be quite incapable of worrying even if they wanted to) about having clean hands. But it also serves to justify the impotent intellectuals, the Parisian intelligentsia, who live on a diet of words, *in doing nothing*.

For it is not the least important characteristic of this commonplace that it is invoked by those who

do nothing and who claim to have dirty hands in order to give the impression that they have done something. "I signed a manifesto, I am committed, see how dirty my hands are!" "I made a speech, I wrote an article, I demonstrated and shouted in the street — just look how dirty my hands are! I am not like those awful intellectuals who . . ." To claim that you have dirty hands is a badge, a guarantee that you aren't in an ivory tower, that you are in the world, in touch with the workers.

For the very people who have elaborated the doctrine expressed in the commonplace are the mandarins, "the specialists in freedom, justice, and morality," and although their morality may be a morality of ambiguity, their freedom may be the freedom of a renewed creation, their justice may be the justice of a proletarian social order, nevertheless the applications are deceptive and their virtues are always in capital letters; for where there is only ambiguity, there is no morality. For them, freedom is either total or nonexistent; they cannot be satisfied with the odds and ends of freedoms that can be gathered by the side of any road. The Communist order must result not in a little more justice, always succumbing to injustice, but in the classless society, hence the society without exploitation, hence without evil, hence without a state: a real paradise on earth. Short of this, nothing makes any sense.

This excess of absolutism radically seals off all possibilities of human endeavor, and because one

can neither see the real nor take part in a doubtful battle, one praises dirty hands because they are necessary to action. For action in itself is well worth this sacrifice, and we have learned that morality has nothing to do with action. But we must be careful. This is theory, and we will be the first to repudiate the tortures of the Nazi camps or the tanks of Budapest. This forces us to see the ridiculous limit to the dirtiness in question: a manifesto at the most. But as for really getting your hands dirty by torturing your fellowman — come now! The intellectual remains what he is.

It goes without saying that these heroes with their dirty hands have them only figuratively, by mediation or by proxy. “Darling!” says the lovely Francoise, “look at my dirty hands!” — holding out her manicured, bejeweled fingers. The worker has dirty hands, and the intellectual who supports the cause of the worker is ennobled by this dirt. The politician has dirty hands, and the professor who signs a manifesto profits by a few dabs of this reeking slime. It is the guarantee that you are not a useless person, an idle talker. You support the sacred cause of the worker. Or else you are using politics (which is the only way) to work for a better world.

It is true that in our society anyone who makes his living by thinking, or trying to think, is not very highly regarded. He must find some useful purpose for himself, he must attach himself to someone or something useful, something recognized as “valuable” by the society and by public opinion. Under these circumstances, the claim to have dirty hands serves as a justification for the man who never leaves his office. But it also enables our intellectual to perform his proper and traditional function of classical chorus: he explains and justifies the actions of the others. For it goes without saying that in profiting by the filth of men of action, he renders them a little service. He explains and justifies this filth in the eyes of a world that is dazzled by such great theatrical subtlety, such great philosophical profundity.

OUR hero heaves a deep sigh — “Ah! Look at my dirty hands!” — with the faintest suggestion of disgust, of course, his brow anxious, his lips drawn by this heroic sacrifice, and shaking his head; you must understand that this is not usual for him, that it is only by compulsion and duty that he has come to this. It is not so easy to have dirty hands. But his face also hides a slight sense of triumph; it is the false modesty of the victor. For now this do-nothing is recognized, patented, ennobled by the beauty and purity of the dirt of the worker or the political hero. To be a man you have to pay the price, don’t you? And according to the teachings of the

master, you are not born a man, you become one, you create yourself by choice, by action; and you can’t act without getting your hands dirty. See my hands . . . therefore I have become a man. The circle is complete.

In reality all this is a farce, because, among other reasons, nobody ever bothers to ask whether this action has any point, whether it is constructive for man; the intellectual is so thirsty for action these days that he is ready to accept the dictum of a very bourgeois poet: “Learn absurd things in order to learn goodwill.” Do anything at all, as long as you do something! Still less does anybody ask himself whether this action is worth the price he is ready to pay, the price of the filth, and if after all it might not be better to keep one’s hands clean rather than do these idiotic things and undertake these pseudocommitments, manifestos, announcements, signatures, and declarations.

The fact is, of course, that it is difficult to draw the line between a political “action” whose own validity, significance, and complexities are almost impossible to discern and the moral, intellectual, or spiritual corruption to which the action forces you. But I am forgetting myself and getting sidetracked by these intellectual concerns, which are precisely what we want to repudiate by immersing ourselves in action. Away with intellectualizing! Politics calls. We must live for her, and for her we must die.

This intellectualizing is doubly empty, for the person who plays the game of dirty hands and has thrown himself into Sartrean pseudocommitment *has never chosen*. He has never deliberated or weighed the reasons and the chances. Dirty hands are not the result of a decision or a commitment. The person who protects himself behind this commonplace is aware that he is none too clean and pretends that this is by choice, but this is far from the truth. The man who affects the grime of the worker is in reality immersed in a very different kind of filth. And when someone tells you that you have to get your hands dirty, it means that he is up to his eyes in the septic tank. The commonplace about dirty hands does not imply, as people seem to think, that everything else is quite clean and well scrubbed, and that after all you’ve got to get your hands into the dishwasher, but that fortunately in these modern houses the toilet is not far from the shower.

I seem to be contradicting myself. In my first proposition I said that our man did not have dirty hands in *reality*, but only by proxy. In my second proposition I am arguing that he is fundamentally dirty and radically corrupt. The contradiction is only apparent. The man who *talks* about dirty hands, who *admits* the necessity for having them, is as yet only a talker; he is in fact in no way defiled

by action, by real participation, by work, for he plays no effective role, he participates in nothing but words. "*Corragio, lavoratori!*" When Sartre writes *Dirty Hands* or *The Manifesto of the 121*, he is not getting his hands dirty at all — at most, his pen.

But this taint that does not come from action (there is no action!) exists in the conscience. It does not *come* from participation in politics or from the transformation of the world; it is there to begin with, planted in the bottom of the heart. It is a function of existence rather than of action. To anyone who accuses me of making an arbitrary judgment I will reply that I have objective proof in the very fact of formulating the commonplace "You can't act without getting your hands dirty." This simple remark implies on the part of the speaker an *a priori* acceptance of *all* compromise and *all* dirt, all betrayals and all acts of contempt toward man, all degradation and all genocide; it is the voice of consenting cowardice parading as the courage of commitment.

For the man who has acted and killed to repent *afterward* and say, "I carry the weight of all the evil I have done" is the true human condition. This man is worthy of respect. But for a man to excuse himself *beforehand* for the abomination, to accept everything in advance and justify himself in advance, is the worst of corruptions. This is to surrender in advance, without resistance and without conscience, to what happens, to what will be deemed the necessity of action. And once one has started in this direction, everything will very readily be accepted as the necessity of action; which presupposes, therefore, that there is no limit to the evil to be done in order to succeed. And the worst happens when it is the intellectual who provides this advance justification for the man of action, for then the magical prestige of intelligence frees him of his last scruples, and he loses all restraint. The road is wide open for him now that he has the benediction of the intellectual authorities, who play the same role that the Church once played in wars. We can be sure that in the use of torture, the spread of mass murder, and the development of concentration camps, those intellectuals who maintain that "you have to get your hands dirty" have done far more than soldiers and policemen.

Since we are on the subject of dirty hands, we must be willing to look at mud. Why this doctrine? Why this banner? Is it a question of thought, a question of commitment (although, as we have seen, commitment to nothing effective)? Alas, how fine that would be! Certain writers are more naive, and admit what it really means for a writer to be committed is "to be rooted in a collective reality, and the larger this reality is, the greater his chance of speaking the language, meeting the ex-

pectations, satisfying the needs of the average reader." In other words, to be committed is to assure oneself an audience, to attract customers.

You think I am exaggerating? Sartre said as much in *The Jewish Question*. To make your living as an intellectual "you must seduce, arrest, win people's confidence . . . the most important thing is reputation: you make a reputation and you live by it." And it is quite true that in our society an intellectual cannot sell his novels unless he is committed, unless he claims to have dirty hands. To sign manifestos (and the more revolutionary, excessive, demanding they are, the more they impress) is to do exactly what the public expects of a writer — this public passionately interested in politics, thirsty for action, believing both in facts and in justice. We are rather far from a lofty reason for agreeing to soil our hands. We are interested only in assuring ourselves an income. But perhaps, after all, this is what the intellectual means by having dirty hands? Ssh, don't say it.

THE only respectable human decision is to refuse all compromise in advance. It is to know, of course, that in action, in practice, in combat, "evil eventually creeps in," but never to accept it, never to tolerate it, never to justify it; to know that killing is killing, and that there is no way to resign oneself to it. For the moment this attitude of refusing all compromise is taken, there is no impediment to action, no refuge in sterile purity. It is a point of departure that permits me full liberty, since instead of being bound to action, swept along by the tide of circumstances, I find myself forced to decide again on each occasion whether this action is worthwhile, whether this enterprise is sufficiently trustworthy to merit the risk of soiling my hands. When I have decided to keep my hands clean, it means that at every moment I must consider the degree of corruption that the action involves and how far and how long I can tolerate it. When I have decided to keep my hands clean, I can remain an independent man who imposes a certain direction on politics or on the struggle I am waging instead of yielding to the contingencies of the moment, and in the end I can furnish that testimony to man which contemporary humanists are so eager for but which their commonplaces render them unfit to provide.

There is a final consideration. When we examine these heroes committed to dirty hands, we soon observe that there is no conscience more demanding, more lofty, more moral than theirs — *for their adversaries*. Those who agree to get their hands dirty, who make this enormous sacrifice for the sake of the action that must be taken, turn

out to be amazingly scrupulous when it comes to their enemies: *they* must have clean hands. It is the adversary who must become a paragon of virtue, and our heroes squawk like guinea hens as soon as they discover the tiniest spot of mud on the hands of the enemy. They invoke natural morality, the dignity of man, the divine virtues, and the international charter of the rights of man. The enemy is forced to represent everything that we (alas!) are obliged not to represent. So we have two sets of weights and measures, all, of course, in praise of the adversary. The FLN murders members of the MNA, plants bombs in cafés, tortures prisoners: ah! it's very awkward, war involves painful necessities, you know. You don't win freedom without getting your hands dirty. The French Army tortures its prisoners: it is an inconceivable scandal to moral conscience and Christian civilization; our great ancestors, the virtuous Jacobins, turn over in their graves in indignation. The first duty of the French Army is to keep its hands clean. Surely the most remarkable part is that this demand for honor and purity comes from those who despise the army.

These days we are in the habit of permitting everything and excusing everything in our party, our friends, and our allies, and reserving moral criticism for our enemies. There was a time when the dignity of man implied the opposite behavior! China invades Tibet for no reason, either military or economic: a pure war of conquest, pure aggression. It destroys ancient structures and annihilates part of the population. Why not? The Chinese are carrying out a great plan, they are engaged in an exceptional undertaking that they can achieve only at the price of a few mistakes, and even (let's admit it) a few injustices; but after all, we know what politics is, and if Mao decided that it was indispensable, though regrettable, which of us could contradict him? But, mind you, if the United States tries to intervene in Colombia or Cuba, that is an intolerable demonstration of imperialism. The United States does not have the right to play politics: it must use only pure methods and preserve virtue and morality. Of course, there is a large measure of truth in this demand, since the United States is hypocritical enough to proclaim itself the defender of morality, freedom, and virtue! And I do not rule out this judgment! But I am amazed that it is made by the very people who regard dirty hands as a necessity of politics and of action and who use them to justify all political action.

So far I have cited only examples from the left, for they are the most frequent today. But the right has known the same orientation with Maurras, and albums like *Aucune bête au monde* demonstrate that the nobility of dirty hands also belongs to the

other side, *idem*, Montherlant or Saint-Exupéry, to begin with. But in these denunciations of dirty hands by the theorists of commitment we again find the delightful candor of our good intellectuals. Read the juicy *Droit à l'insoumission* and the study in *Combat* in which intellectuals explain why they signed *The Manifesto of the 121*, and you will see clearly admitted that the reason they signed, the reason they committed themselves, was so that nobody could reproach them, as they did the Germans after the war, for remaining silent in the face of Nazism. Adorable pure consciences, thanks to the theory of dirty hands! I commit myself so I can be sure not to commit myself to anything at all. I sign a protest because that is the best insurance policy for the future — you never know how things will turn out. Father, look out on the right! Father, look out on the left! The main thing is that nobody can reproach us for not protesting, for not making a fuss. So to have dirty hands is to insure yourself against the dirt of a possible concentration camp. Everything depends on being shrewd enough to guess how it will turn out. This is why commitment flourishes among intellectuals when the die has virtually been cast. This, then, by an admirable dialectic, is the theory of dirty hands, the noble affirmation of the necessity of commitment which serves only one purpose: to disassociate oneself, in the eyes of one's public and of history, from those whose hands are really dirty.

But, someone is sure to object, if you absolutely rule out dirty hands, don't you rule out politics? Granted! It has rarely been tried. But if this is really so, could we then say that politics is a dirty game? Why should I judge morality in terms of politics, considering the first legitimate, and the second, since contradictory to the first, illegitimate? I have not yet found any proof that politics is the imperative of man's salvation, although many impassioned declarations have, of course, been written on the subject. But I have not seen one that went beyond the level of the campaign poster.

A BRACELET

BY ROBERT GRAVES

A bracelet invisible
 For your busy wrist,
 Twisted from silver
 Spilt afar,
 From silver of the clear Moon,
 From her sheer halo,
 From the male beauty
 Of a shooting star.

BOOKS and MEN "A glimpse into the workshop" is how Walt Whitman described his "blue book," the author's own intimate copy of *LEAVES OF GRASS*, with his many notes, revisions, and comments on his masterwork. Now reproduced for the first time (in a facsimile edition), the *BLUE BOOK* affords Mr. Kaplan, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *MR. CLEMENS AND MARK TWAIN*, an opportunity for a revealing reassessment of Whitman the man. Mr. Kaplan is at present working on a biography of Lincoln Steffens.

NINE OLD BONES

Walt Whitman's Blue Book

by JUSTIN KAPLAN



IT NOW seems much more than seventy-six years since the March day in Camden, New Jersey, when Walt Whitman's disciples, after devotional readings from Buddha, Confucius, Isaiah, Jesus, Mohammed, and *Leaves of Grass*, deposited him in the classy sepulcher he had ordered carved after some drawings by William Blake. As a cult hero in his late lifetime the Good Gray Poet had already generated a literature of comment and biography, a little part of which he wrote himself, and since 1892 this literature has grown to a point where in bulk, but certainly not in daring or discrimination, it compares favorably with what has been written about Shakespeare, or at least Joan of Arc. Sculpted in American grandiose, with a look that is benevolent but basically vacant, Whitman has become a sort of Mount Rushmore sphinx. He has all the answers — to birth, death, love, the soul, the simple, separate self, and the democratic mass. "Garrulous to the very last," he said. But there is a riddle he never answered. Who was he really, and how and why, in 1855, at the relatively late age of thirty-six, did this former printer, schoolteacher, journalist, carpenter, and speculator in Brooklyn real estate suddenly emerge as the poet of *Leaves of Grass*?

"I was simmering, simmering; Emerson brought me to a boil," Whitman said. The wife of one of his chief partisans recalled another statement which

he made a few years after that sudden emergence. "He said that very much of it was written under great pressure, pressure from within. He felt that he must do it." And late in his life Whitman gave an even vaguer explanation: "The book arose out of my life in Brooklyn and New York, from 1838 to 1853, absorbing a million people, for fifteen years, with an intimacy, an eagerness, an abandon, probably never equalled."

Presented with such accounts, Whitman's biographers and critics have had to fall back on "miracle" and "mystic experience," both of them accurate terms, no doubt, and both of them also impervious to "explanation." Surely by now we ought to know a lot more about Whitman than we do. We ought to have some psychological and literary context for what happened to him. But we still have only the general, chronological, surface shape of the transformation by which the vagrant, purposeless Walter Whitman, Jr., began to project himself over the roofs of the world as Walt Whitman, one of the roughs, a poet.

There had been some sort of Damascene experience. We know this from several veiled references Whitman made during the 1850s. And we know this from "Song of Myself," which was once called simply "Walt Whitman." That dazzling poem is a chronicle as well as a celebration of a sexual

and mystic revelation: the drifter's small soul dilated, entered into a loving relationship with the universe. And Whitman began to write poetry before which criticism, or any other form of analysis, simply has to lay down its arms. There is nothing quite like it, Whitman at his best. And when he is at his awful worst, you almost love him for that too — he is so unworried and so irresponsible.

Reading *Leaves of Grass* barely two weeks after it was published, Emerson believed that he had been present at a miracle and that he had to rub his eyes a little "to see if this sunbeam were no illusion." But for all his joy and wonder, his admiration for "the most extraordinary piece of wit and wisdom that America has yet contributed," Emerson insisted on remaining a rational historian of personality. "I greet you at the beginning of a great career," he wrote in his celebrated letter to Whitman, "which yet must have had a long foreground somewhere, for such a start."

Still, most of the commentators say that there was no real "foreground" for Whitman's transformation in any of the facts of his early life or in the journalism, fiction, and conventional poetry he wrote before *Leaves of Grass* — no apprenticeship, no line of development, not even any promise. "The poet materializes like a shape from the depths," says Malcolm Cowley, who, along with Randall Jarrell, is among the most acute of the recent critics: "There is no other word but miracle to describe what happened to Whitman at the age of thirty-six." Again we are back at the word "miracle."

ACCORDING to the official survey of the terrain, Walt Whitman's internal foreground is about as bare as the old lady's cupboard. It is almost impossible, at any point in his life, to find a hard core to his personality, or any hard outlines. There may not have been any, and this may be why Whitman finds it so easy, or so necessary, to merge his own with any other identity. Moreover, Whitman himself is often coy, evasive, deliberately mystifying, and, on at least one occasion, even downright mendacious. "My life, young manhood, mid-age, times South, etc., have been jolly bodily, and doubtless open to criticism," he once wrote. "Though unmarried I have had six children — two are dead — one living grandchild, fine boy, writes to me occasionally." This is the first and last we hear of the offspring.

Because the foreground is so bare I had hoped that the *Blue Book*,¹ an intimate document from a

period of great trial and exhaustion in Whitman's life, would reveal something profoundly personal or new. It should, really, if anything can: it is Whitman's own unique paperbound copy of *Leaves of Grass* in which, during the black Civil War years and a little after, he made many notes and revisions for a new edition. But for the most part, the *Blue Book* does not show anything dramatic, such as Whitman radically evolving his personality or that of the separate and distinct "I" of the poem; the *Blue Book* has another value altogether, which we will come to. Again, the secretive Whitman is in command, for when, at the age of seventy-one, he gave the book to Horace Traubel, a disciple, he promised far more than the book actually delivered. Here is what he told Traubel:

You fellows value these curios more than I do. This will help you to see how the book grew, if that is anything. But I guess you would know how it grew if you never possessed this book. The book is a mile-post. . . . This gives you a glimpse into the workshop. It is wonderful to me how great a store you fellows have got to set on these things. God be with you!

Compounding all the difficulties that Whitman contributed to the record of his life is the fact that despite the blessings and the pat on the back, his biographers have been timid about using the normal tools of speculation and conjecture. They prefer to scant his edgy psychopathology ("There is nothing really abnormal in Whitman except his excess," said one biographer) and sidestep the fact that he was homosexual, which is simply undeniable if one reads with any kind of honesty the notebooks, poetry, letters, and supporting evidence. In general the biographers, infected by Whitman's public cheerfulness and his deliberate identification with a national oversoul, do not like the obvious truth that a lot of unpleasantness, shame, and misery can go into the making of even a little high art.

Take, for example, the crudest inventory of Whitman's family, not necessarily as a background for the making of a poet but possibly one for the breaking of a man. The father, a failure as farmer, housebuilder, and general handyman, was bitter, tyrannical, capable of terrible rages, liable to long sick depressions, and, as his son believed at any rate, an alcoholic. And in classic opposition, the mother, semiliterate and fearful, idolized her son Walt, her second-born, pampered him, and he was bound to her for the rest of her life and his. The Whitman parents had nine children. Of the two girls, one was described as capricious and headstrong; the other was a brawler and slattern, a psychopath who married another psychopath, who beat her. Of the six sons who survived infancy, one was a hysteric who became violent in maturity and died in a lunatic asylum, very

¹ *Walt Whitman's Blue Book: The 1860-61 Leaves of Grass Containing His Manuscript Additions and Revisions*. Two volumes. I. Facsimile. II. Textual analysis by Arthur Golden. The New York Public Library, 1968. \$30.00.

likely of paresis; one was a habitual drunkard whose widow became a prostitute; one was a mild incompetent; one was a lifelong cripple and imbecile; one rose to colonel in the Union Army; and one, of course, was the poet, who, inevitably reacting against this background and fighting his own depression and breakdowns, preached what William James called "the religion of healthy-mindedness."

At the age of seventeen Whitman, backed up by his mother, had a decisive argument with his father, who had ordered him to put aside his dreaminess and vague literary yearnings and settle down to work on the family farm. For about five years after this Whitman was an occasional schoolteacher, and then a journalist in New York, where two parallel developments began to take place in him. He became a dandy, a *flâneur*, who was to be seen strolling down Broadway to the Battery dressed in a frock coat with a boutonniere and carrying a cane. His employers were irritated by his languor, his nonchalance about assignments. In this new manner, which he later renounced,

No dainty dolce affetuoso I,
Bearded, sun-burnt, gray-neck'd, forbidding, I have
arrived,

he had got about as far away from his father and the farm as he could. And early in this New York period, when he was twenty-two or twenty-three years old, Whitman published ten stories and a novel. He had never been so productive, and he was not to be that productive again until he started to write *Leaves of Grass*.

REMARKABLY, Whitman's biographers, who all recognize this fiction as dreary stuff without much promise, still refuse to look at the stories thematically in order to find some "faint clews and indications," in Whitman's phrase, as to what was going on in the mind and psyche of the future poet. This neglect is even more remarkable because, at the time, Whitman was proud of the fame these stories brought him — after all, they proved that he was right when he refused to obey his father and instead struck off into literature, away from the farm and toward the big city. The conflict with his father, together with the role his mother played, is a main subject of Whitman's fiction.

The earliest of these stories, "Death in the Schoolroom (a Fact)," is about a thirteen-year-old boy of unearthly fairness who suffers from a "fearful inward disease," lives with his adored and adoring widowed mother, but is literally bullied to death by a despotic schoolmaster, who ends up flogging the boy's corpse. In "Wild Frank's Return," an-

other adored son, after a dispute with his harsh farmer-father over a favorite mare, goes off to sea. Two years later Frank sets out for home again, on the way falls into a semimystic repose under an oak tree, and when a thunderstorm breaks, is dragged to his death by the horse. (Whitman made an entry in his notebook about his own favorite mare, Nina, whom he had to sell in 1839 before going to New York to look for a job; and Wild Frank's repose suggests the summer day on the grass Whitman was to write about in "Song of Myself.") Another story deals with a boy who, in order to support his widowed mother, is apprenticed to a harsh and avaricious master, "a soulless gold-worshipper." The boy is picked up in a bar by a young libertine who later shares a bed with him. "Bervance: or, Father and Son" deals with a cruel father who schemes to have a rebellious son locked up in a lunatic asylum; the boy runs away from home and is never seen again. And running away from home to the big city and coming to a bad end is the main theme of Whitman's one novel, *Franklin Evans; or The Inebriate*.

Of course many of these themes and situations — harsh fathers (or father figures), adoring mothers, the contrast between the city and the innocent country — appear in conventional cheap fiction of Whitman's day, a lot of which is hardly more mawkish, melodramatic, and hackneyed than these stories. But there are some special signals here: the way Whitman insistently patterns and returns to these themes, the way he develops explicit parallels to his own situation, and the way some of the writing has a texture of reference and symbol which anticipates *Leaves of Grass* in striking ways. The title of one of these stories, "Tomb Blossoms," is a central Whitman trope; and the story itself contains some familiar images — the grass as the long uncut hair of graves, the invoking of "lovely and soothing death," the image of "the dark mother," which later appears in the great elegy for Lincoln.

All of this suggests to me that the one-year cycle of fiction writing came out of a deeper motive and a more intense if temporary resolution than Whitman's biographers have been willing to see, and that a real look at this writing might help us to sketch in that "long foreground." For beneath the clichéd surfaces of the fiction are evidences of the nature and thrust of an intimate crisis, of a groping for a new identity (which also involved a sexual direction), and of a sense of shame, hiding, and fear.

Whitman's most recent and respected biographer, Professor Gay Wilson Allen, says of the early stories: "The young author seems to have almost a compulsion to write about cruel fathers." And, as far as biographical interpretation goes, Professor Allen leaves it pretty much at that. Another

commentator says of "Death in the Schoolroom": "He even wrote a very melodramatic story . . . to show the terrible dangers children might run from the brutality of a teacher." The biographers back away from potential foreground facts instead of making the most of them, even though a little exploration undoubtedly involves a risk. This is the risk of reconstructing out of guesswork, intuition, inference, and limited data what Mark Twain, lampooning Shakespeare biographies, described as a fifty-seven-foot-high brontosaurus skeleton which looks convincing enough in the natural history museum but is actually made out of six hundred barrels of plaster of paris and maybe only nine old bones.

Despite their scarcity, there are real Whitman bones around, enough of them to give us a more convincing reconstruction of the man than the one we have now. But the biographer has got to be willing to recognize bones as bones and be grateful for them, as he should now be grateful to the New York Public Library for issuing a facsimile of the *Blue Book*, a document which not only played a pivotal role in Whitman's later life but which also puts us, briefly, in the presence of the man himself.

WHITMAN'S notes in ink and in three colors of pencil, and all the complexly folded, fragile inserts and interleavings which had made it difficult for anyone to study the original without damaging it — these are all reproduced in the Library's facsimile, which comes with an accompanying volume of transcript and textual analysis by Arthur Golden of C.C.N.Y. One has only to open the front cover of the *Blue Book* to find some distinctive evidence of Walt Whitman at work: there he is, counting up the words in the Bible, *The Aeneid*, *Inferno*, *Paradise Lost*, and *Leaves of Grass*, a reminder that he thought of his book not only as the American epic but as a new Bible which would eventually have one poem for each day of the year.

In 1863, when Whitman was in Washington as an unofficial nurse and hospital visitor, he asked his mother to watch over the papers and manuscripts he had left behind in Brooklyn, "especially the copy of *Leaves of Grass* covered in blue paper, and the little MS book 'Drum Taps.' . . . I want them all carefully kept." By January, 1865, when he was appointed to a clerkship in the Indian Bureau of the Department of the Interior, he finally had "a perfect copy" of *Drum-Taps* ready for the printer but was still at work on the *Blue Book*, which he kept in his office desk. In May the new Secretary of the Interior, James Harlan, a Radical Republican (in Reconstruction terms), ordered government employees in the department checked

for "loyalty," "fidelity," and "moral character." Someone brought the *Blue Book*, with its running message of sexual freedom, to Harlan's attention, and it was seen on Harlan's desk, according to an informal affidavit the assistant secretary gave Whitman a few months later: "a volume of *Leaves of Grass*, in blue paper covers, & the pages of the poems marked more or less all through the book." Without any warning, on June 30, Harlan notified Whitman that his services would be "dispensed with from and after this date."

Within a day Whitman's friends got him another government job, this time as clerk in the Attorney General's office, but Whitman's dismissal had an effect which outlived the immediate sense of outrage and even the poet himself. For Whitman and his disciples, whose grief over Lincoln's martyrdom was still strong and fresh, the dismissal crystallized a messianic pattern of gospel, persecution, and passion and drove them to contrive the messianic stance of the Good Gray Poet.

As Mr. Golden says in his excellent introduction to the *Blue Book*, this "glimpse into the workshop" shows us a private Walt Whitman who is neither the bardic rowdy and self-promoter of the early editions of *Leaves of Grass* nor the Good Gray Poet and Guru of Camden who dominated the poetry and prose of the later years. Instead we see the "unassuming, forthright" poet who between 1860 and 1865, a time when he gave a major part of his energies over to nursing the sick and the wounded, wrote important new poems (among them "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd") and carefully revised most of the old ones. All but thirty-four of the 456 pages of the *Blue Book* show some kind of revision. Whitman worked, says Mr. Golden, "with a kind of ruthlessness, at times a frenzy, in his attempt to tighten and reshape" *Leaves of Grass*. He rejected forty poems, shortened others, and abridged some of the lengthy catalogues (leaving, however, enough of them to provoke Emerson's laconic joke in 1871: "I expect him to make the songs of the Nation, but he seems to be contented to make the inventories"). He worked toward precision, toward clarifying the rhythms. Sometimes he flirts with gentility and considers flattening out some of his colloquialisms. "Life is a suck and a sell" is penciled out to "life is a hollow game," which Longfellow could have written, and the idiosyncratic line

Washes and razors for foofoos — for me freckles and
a bristling beard

becomes "Washes and razors for those that will. . . ." But by the time the new edition was ready for the printer, Whitman had changed his mind once again, and he restored the earlier reading.

Here and there Whitman mutes the sexual exuberance of *Leaves of Grass*. He deletes:

Thruster holding me tight, and that I hold tight!
We hurt each other as the bridegroom and the bride
hurt each other.

And his response to the voice of "the trained soprano" — "she convulses me like the climax of my love-grip" — has now been stepped down to about six volts. But for the most part the *Blue Book* revisions attack the belief current since 1902, when one of the second-generation disciples prepared a variorum edition, that after the Harlan affair Whitman soft-pedaled the sexuality of *Leaves of Grass*.

Even when Whitman is revising on literary grounds, those grounds are as shifting as anything else about him. For every good reason he left comparatively untouched the towering "Song of Myself." But he also left untouched such descents into the badlands as

You working-man of the Rhine, the Elbe, or the Weser!
you working-woman too!

and

O hymen! O hymence!
Why do you tantalize me thus?

"Very well, then, I contradict myself," Whitman said, and the *Blue Book* gives us a partial glimpse of the self-contradictory writer at work and at play: "unassuming" and "forthright" as a literary workman, dedicated and great-souled, but also mischievous, silly, and vain, an oaf, a prophet subject to flights of megalomania, and a poet rarely dumb but often stone-deaf. And seeing this much of the personality Whitman has arrived at, we may be able, eventually, to deduce a little more about where he came from, the "long foreground." But it is a last glimpse that the *Blue Book* gives: the story of Whitman's later years is essentially the story of a disappearing act, for now, stung by the Harlan episode, it is the public Whitman, supported by disciples, who takes over.

A few months after the "outrage," Whitman's close friend William O'Connor wrote an attack on Harlan and an impassioned vindication of *Leaves of Grass* from which the poet emerged as a world figure, a prophet of humanity as well as America, whose physical presence alone — "majestic, large, Homeric" — set him apart as an epic hero. According to O'Connor, Abraham Lincoln had gazed out a window of the White House as the poet passed by and said, "with a significant emphasis which the type can hardly convey — 'Well, *he* looks like a MAN!'" This legend, the

whole overblown pamphlet (much of which sounds like Whitman himself), and its inspired title, *The Good Gray Poet*, seemed to answer Harlan's demand for "loyalty," "fidelity," and "moral character" but went far beyond into another dimension. In 1867, another partisan, the naturalist John Burroughs, published a similar larger-than-life document, *Notes on Walt Whitman as Poet and Person*, at least half of which was written by the poet and person, and the following year O'Connor published a crudely allegorical story about Whitman called "The Carpenter." As before, O'Connor "had some difficulty in distinguishing Walt Whitman from Jesus Christ," says Mr. Golden, who should have added that Whitman himself sometimes had the same difficulty. "My spirit to yours dear brother," the poet addressed "Him that was Crucified" — "I understand you."

To the end of his life Whitman and the hot band of the faithful who clustered around him in Camden stimulated each other to comparable exercises in levitation, all of which had a disastrous effect. The man and the bones disappeared altogether into the rendering vat and were steamily absorbed into a sweet-smelling colloidal suspension of disbelief and borax. The incomparable poet was subordinated to the second-rate philosopher, sage, and messenger of cosmic consciousness. And the ultimate effect of this cultism, as James Huneker said, was that its "slush, hash, obscurity, morbid eroticism, vulgarity, and preposterous mouthings well-nigh spoil one's taste for what is really great in *Leaves of Grass*."

The core personality which surfaced briefly in the *Blue Book* will not, certainly, turn out to be the Good Gray Poet. But it may turn out to be *something* gray, something that was strangely plastic, passive, and spongy even when the "miracle" began to happen. In a way which may be unique, Walt Whitman's entire life had gone into his one book, and through that book he gave himself health, created, destroyed, and resurrected himself in a different form. He is always telling us this:

If you want me again look for me under your boot-soles.

When you read this, I, that was visible, am become invisible.

The last two lines of the *Blue Book* are:

I depart from materials,
I am as one disembodied, triumphant, dead.

And even when Whitman says,

Camerado! This is no book;
Who touches this, touches a man,

he may mean the book was all there was of him.

THE WRONG RUBICON

LBJ and the War

by TOM WICKER

On March 31, 1968, Lyndon B. Johnson, 36th President of the United States, became a casualty of the war in Vietnam, a war that started years before he became President but which, in his time of leadership, grew in intensity and threatened to disrupt this republic. How the fate of LBJ and the course of the Vietnam War became interlocked is the subject of this study by the Washington columnist and bureau chief of the New York TIMES. It is taken from Mr. Wicker's new book, JFK & LBJ: A STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY ON POLITICS, to be published later this month by Morrow.

WHEN Lyndon B. Johnson became President he was something of a throwback to another time. He was a decade older than John F. Kennedy — just enough older to identify him with an earlier generation and its somewhat different view of the world. He was not a product of the Ivy League and the East; he had not come under much influence from the liberal intellectuals who had surrounded Kennedy; unlike them, he had not chafed on the sidelines during the cold war years of the Eisenhower Administration. But it was these liberal intellectuals who had come to power in 1961, while Johnson's obscurity in the vice presidency had kept him out of the main channels of Kennedy Administration talk, thought, and outlook. His view of the world had been shaped neither academically nor in Kennedy's service but while he was the Senate Majority Leader in the fifties, in the full chill of the cold war, when he had been frequently summoned to the White House for briefings by Eisenhower and Foster Dulles. In "responsible" bipartisan fashion he generally supported their foreign policy objectives in Congress.

Johnson was a middle-aged man of small-town America, both a Westerner and a Southerner, and except where politics had

demonstrably forced his growth — as on the question of civil rights — he functioned, like most men, as a product of his background. There is little to suggest that at this time he saw the world moving away from the stereotype he had accepted in the fifties — the notion of the "Communist bloc" monolithically seeking to bury "the free world." Like any Rotarian or state legislator and many members of Congress, he saw this world conflict in terms of good and evil, and if he was by no means a right-winger who spied a Communist under every bed and believed in holy war against them, he still was at the time of his accession to the presidency one of those millions of Americans who were nationalist almost to the point of nativism, impressed by the lesson of World War II that aggression unchecked was aggression unleashed, and whose years of greatest activity had coincided with the frustrations and passions of the cold war. Thus his kind of "internationalism" was in many ways only the reverse coin of the old isolationism of the thirties; both were based on a self-righteous sense of American superiority, on a sort of "higher morality" that derived from pride in democracy, free enterprise, and material success. And in Johnson's case it would never be entirely free from the attitudes

of the hard-scrabble Texas hill country in which he had grown up, amid dust, poverty, and struggle.

"I know these Latin Americans," he remarked privately to a group of reporters, not long after becoming President. "I grew up with Mexicans. They'll come right into your yard and take it over if you let them. And the next day they'll be right up on your porch, barefoot and weighing one hundred and thirty pounds and they'll take that too. But if you say to 'em right at the start, 'Hold on, just wait a minute,' they'll know they're dealing with somebody who'll stand up. And after that you can get along fine."

If there was a suggestion here that despite his genuine concern for the poor and downtrodden, Johnson thought somewhat in terms of a "white man's burden" to do something useful for other races without yielding much to them, he was more explicit, early in 1964, about his attitude toward Communists. He didn't agree, he said in another private conversation, with the liberals who thought that "fat Communists" were better than lean and hungry ones. Communists were all alike, he went on, and he believed in keeping them off balance and worried. "The more trouble they have the better for us," he said.

Johnson had not presided over disaster at the Bay of Pigs, nor necessarily drawn Kennedy's conclusions about the dangers of relying upon so-called "experts" rather than upon his own judgment or that of men he knew to be sound and trustworthy whether or not "expert." He had not personally suffered the frustrations, anguish, and political dangers of that debacle or undergone the "somber" experience of Khrushchev's polemics at Vienna, or found himself and his government unprepared and embarrassed by the Berlin Wall. With the military, Johnson's primary experience had been in congressional committees and then more as an ally against the traditional enemy, the executive branch politicians, than as a critic or judge.

Significantly, Johnson came into office with considerable confidence in Secretary Rusk, who had been of declining influence in the Kennedy Administration, and in Secretary McNamara. Rusk had been the official deputed by Kennedy to keep the touchy Vice President Johnson informed on world affairs; with his bureaucrat's scrupulous attention to detail and possibility, Rusk had carried out the assignment generously, and Johnson took to the White House with him no little gratitude as well as the impression that the Secretary was a man who appreciated him and with whom he could work. Since, in more influential circumstances than the Kennedy Administration had accorded him, Rusk would reveal himself as the hardest of the "hard-liners" on Asian Communism,

this relationship was of profound importance for the future. Of McNamara, with whom he had at that time no such special relationship, Johnson was nonetheless admiring. A month after becoming President, Johnson said flatly: "I think McNamara is the ablest man I ever met."

Johnson, for sound political and diplomatic reasons, had chosen "continuity" as the theme of his new Administration; on November 27, he would say to Congress: "Let us continue." Already, he had asked Kennedy's Cabinet and staff to stay with him. His personal belief in the Secretaries of State and Defense also meant that continuity in foreign policy was not likely to be a quick pose for political effect but would be a fact for some time to come.

Rusk and McNamara were closely identified with the Kennedy Administration's policy in Vietnam. They had a vested interest in its success, on which largely depended their own reputations. They were not likely to recommend its abandonment or fundamental alteration, and as long as Johnson wanted them to remain in office and retained his own real admiration for them, continuity in Vietnam—more of the same—was very nearly certain. And Kennedy, at his death, was not moving openly toward ending the war.

A GOOD deal, moreover, is known of Johnson's own views on Southeast Asia at the time of his accession to the presidency. In May, 1961, under instructions from Kennedy, he had visited Southeast Asia on an official mission, stopping in South Vietnam, Taiwan, the Philippines, Thailand, India, and Pakistan. Among other things, Johnson reached an agreement with Ngo Dinh Diem—whom he incautiously called "the Churchill of today"—for increased American military assistance. According to news reports of the Johnson tour, he also discussed the possible stationing of American troops in both Thailand and South Vietnam.

Johnson also effected an increased military assistance agreement with Thailand. In South Vietnam, he laid heavy stress on combating "Communism's allies"—the poverty and misery he saw in the native villages. Upon his return to Washington, his public statements were concentrated on this aspect of his finding—the need for the United States to do its part in the economic and social development of Southeast Asia as a major means of keeping that area in "the free world."

At a news conference immediately after his return, however, Johnson was asked about the need for sending American troops to the countries he had visited. There was no plan or need for

such a step at that time, he replied, and no promises had been given. But, he added: "I would not want to forever foreclose the possibility of America *protecting her interests* wherever it might be." (Italics added.)

And, he said, he had been "disturbed" that "so many Asian leaders should express doubt as to United States intentions."

In his private report to Kennedy, Johnson stressed the need for economic and social development but bore down much more heavily on the military problem than he had done in his public remarks:

Our mission arrested the decline of confidence in the United States. It did not — in my judgment — restore any confidence already lost. . . .

I cannot stress too strongly the extreme importance of following up this mission with other measures, other actions, and other efforts. . . .

The report presented an almost classic statement of the so-called "domino theory":

The battle against Communism must be joined in Southeast Asia with strength and determination to achieve success there — or the United States, inevitably, must surrender the Pacific and take up our defenses on our own shores. Asian Communism is compromised and contained by the maintenance of free nations on the subcontinent. Without this inhibitory influence, the island outposts — Philippines, Japan, Taiwan — have no security and the vast Pacific becomes a Red Sea.

The "key to what is done by Asians in defense of Southeast Asian freedom," Johnson wrote the President, "is confidence in the United States. There is no alternative to United States leadership in Southeast Asia. . . . SEATO is not now and probably never will be the answer because of British and French unwillingness to support decisive action."

Of course, "these nations cannot be saved by United States help alone." They had to help themselves, particularly in fighting ignorance, poverty, and disease. Nevertheless:

We must decide whether to help these countries to the best of our ability or throw in the towel in the area and pull back our defenses to San Francisco and a "Fortress America" concept. More important, we would say to the world in this case that we don't live up to treaties and don't stand by our friends. . . . I recommend that we move forward promptly with a major effort to help these countries defend themselves. . . .

This decision must be made in a full realization of the very heavy and continuing costs involved in terms of money, of effort and of United States prestige. It must be made with the knowledge that at some point we may be faced with the further decision of whether we commit major United States forces to the area or cut our losses and withdraw should our other efforts fail. We must remain master of this decision.

This is an important Johnsonian document. It shows, first, a full acceptance of the Eisenhower-Dulles "domino theory," which in itself is an expression of an *American interest*: maintaining the frontier in Asia, keeping the battle away from American shores, and holding the "vast Pacific" as part of the "free world" rather than seeing it become a "Red Sea." Johnson's report, moreover, is couched throughout in terms of American interest — enlightened interest, it may be, but American nonetheless; and that is the context in which he spoke to the press about the possible use of American troops in Southeast Asia.

By May, 1961, when there were only a few hundred American advisers and technicians in South Vietnam, Johnson, so seeing the American interest, laid down to Kennedy what was to become a blueprint of the policy he himself would follow in years to come, *including the risk of committing "major United States forces to the area."* Since the term "major" is an imprecise catchall, it is debatable whether Kennedy ever went that far; at his death, U.S. forces in South Vietnam numbered only about 25,000, which no one could have believed was sufficient for the purpose of which Johnson had written. Johnson ultimately raised this number to well over a half million, and there is no doubt that this makes up a "major" force.

This was a significant switch by the Vice President — had it been generally known — because in 1954, during the Dienbienphu campaign, Johnson and Senator Richard Russell of Georgia — the Democratic leader in the Senate and the chairman of the Armed Forces Committee — had been the loudest and strongest opponents of the Eisenhower Administration's tentative plan to go to the aid of the French; both argued strongly the lesson of the Korean War, that the United States never again should become "bogged down" in a land war on the Asian mainland, with its teeming millions, its human waves of soldiers. By early 1961, however, Johnson could already think of putting "major United States forces" into Southeast Asia in pursuit of the *American interest* as expressed in the "domino theory."

FOLLOWING the overthrow of the Diem government and the murder of Diem and his brother, Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge was ordered home for consultations. He was to have had lunch with President Kennedy at his new Virginia country place on Rattlesnake Mountain on Sunday.

Lodge was at the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco when he heard the news of Kennedy's assassination. Even in the excitement and panic of that weekend, however, he was told to come on to

Washington since the new President would be even more in need of consultations than the old.

Lodge arrived on Saturday, visited the East Room of the White House where Kennedy's body lay in state, and early on Sunday afternoon met with the new President in Johnson's high-ceilinged and roomy old vice presidential suite in the Executive Office Building. Secretaries Rusk and McNamara, McGeorge Bundy, John McCone, the CIA director, and George Ball, the Undersecretary of State, met with Johnson and Lodge. Rusk, McNamara, Lodge, and Bundy all had taken part a few days earlier — before the assassination — in a general political-military review of Vietnam that had been held in Honolulu.

Lodge's report was bleak, although he made no specific requests for Johnson to decide upon. In the wake of Diem's removal, the ambassador said, the new government of South Vietnam was shaky and ineffective, political rivalries were sprouting in and out of it, and the various forces set free by the end of Diem's repression were threatening political chaos. The Viet Cong, already powerful enough, seemed to be redoubling their efforts to take military advantage of what amounted to a divided and leaderless nation. The South Vietnamese Army had managed the coup, but otherwise it was corrupt and inefficient and lacked a real will to fight as well as the leadership to succeed in such battles as it could not avoid.

In short, Lodge, an old friend of Johnson's from their Senate days, whom Johnson once had recommended to Eisenhower for Secretary of Defense, and who was thus close enough to the new President to speak his mind (Lodge is not a man to mince words, anyway), told the emotionally drained Texan that if Vietnam was to be saved, hard decisions would have to be made.

"Unfortunately, Mr. President," Lodge said, "you will have to make them."

The new President, as recalled by one who was present, scarcely hesitated. "I am not going to lose Vietnam," he said. "I am not going to be the President who saw Southeast Asia go the way China went."

"What kind of political support will you have?" Lodge, the experienced politician, asked his old friend and vice presidential opponent.

"I don't think Congress wants us to let the Communists take over South Vietnam," Johnson said.

So the tragedy of Lyndon Johnson — for it may well be that — was set in motion, barely forty-eight hours after he had taken the oath on the plane at Dallas. The moment, if it was there at all, would pass — that moment when, with Diem gone, there might have been the faint possibility of some initial reconciliation between Saigon and the National Liberation Front, and the history of the 1960s

might have been changed. All that would follow — the bombing of the North, the half million young Americans trudging the roads and hills and through the jungles of Vietnam, the huge expenditures, the political divisions at home, the decline abroad, the sapping of a Great Society then unborn, the collapse of the consensus yet to be constructed — had been determined in that hour of political decision.

It *was* a political decision, made by a political man, in political circumstances that left him no real choice. For the first but not the last time Lyndon Johnson's cherished "options" were foreclosed; and even if he had been a different person of different experience, even if he had not chosen continuity and clung to Kennedy's men, even then he could have said nothing else.

Because he was, after all and above all, a new President; he was virtually unknown; he was not universally trusted, and he was even less understood. Throughout the Kennedy years, the people had been narrowly divided; nothing in American politics then was certain — nothing but that a President who failed to pursue a strong line against "Communists" would be vulnerable to political opponents at home and to ambitious adversaries abroad. Even Kennedy, in 1960, had been forced to abandon his "soft" line on such unimportant matters as Quemoy and Matsu; his willingness to apologize to Khrushchev for the U-2 incident had been a major liability, exploited in pre-convention days by none other than Lyndon B. Johnson.

Adversaries at home and abroad were watching the new man. Both would measure his responses, his politics, his attitudes, probing for any weaknesses. Above all other things that dreary November Sunday, Lyndon Johnson had to be strong, which is to say that, at the minimum, he had to *appear* to be strong; in his own words, he, no less than the nation he now must lead, had to convince the world "not to tread on us."

It is a necessity any new President feels, and not merely as an ambitious politician. That a nation should be respected for its strength as well as its purpose and its past is essential for its security and its ideals, let alone for international leadership. It may well be argued that the greatest respect of mankind should flow to moral rather than military strength, and it is certainly true that there are times when retreat is more to be admired than attack, and when the frank confession of error is more courageous than persistence in it. It ought even to be true that, in Wilson's phrase, there is such a thing as a nation being too proud to fight — or even too moral.

Unfortunately, it cannot be true because in the world of men that strength which unerringly gains the most respect is armed strength; and if might

does not truly make right, who can say that it does not rule most of the affairs of men? Thus, political leaders, no matter how beneficial their purposes, tend always to gird up their good intentions with ample armament. "We arm to parley," Churchill said, and in his inaugural address President Kennedy declared ringingly: "Only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed."

This instinct may be regrettable, but it is based on a sure knowledge of man, a predatory animal who does not in practice often turn the other cheek. Thus, armed strength and the willingness to use it are the first requisites of international power, and if this fact is sometimes blamed on political leaders, the righteous who make the charge should ask themselves which came first, men or politicians?

AFTER the Bay of Pigs and after the Khrushchev confrontation, as an example, John Kennedy was in something near despair because he sensed that Khrushchev thought he was inexperienced and weak; James Reston saw Kennedy before he left Vienna, and Kennedy told him he feared that he could never negotiate or deal with the Soviet leader as an equal until he had shown strength and convinced the world of his steadfastness. It is instructive that it was not until the Cuban crisis over a year later, when he threatened to use nuclear weapons on Moscow, that Kennedy finally achieved that goal.

In the meantime, one of the actions he took in pursuit of it may have been his fateful first escalation of the American commitment in Vietnam during the fall of 1961. In his conference with Lodge in November, 1963, President Johnson, under the same pressing necessity, for much the same reason, had taken the second step that would lead to so great a war that none of the distinguished men in the room with him could possibly have imagined it. "*I am not going to be the President who saw Southeast Asia go the way China went.*"

A whole lifetime of political and human experience was distilled in that sentence; the deepest meaning of the endless adventure is to be found in the circumstances that impelled it. Still, it is doubtful that anyone that day, even Johnson himself, thought about the confidential report he had written in 1961 on his return from Southeast Asia. Nor is there anything to suggest that even in the harsh echoes of Lodge's summary anyone foresaw that terrible decision of which the new President once had written "we must remain the master."

The first significant public statement Johnson made about Vietnam as President came on Febru-

ary 21, 1964. He was so new to office that he actually was keeping an appointment made by President Kennedy when, at Charter Day observances at the University of California at Los Angeles, he said:

The contest in which South Vietnam is now engaged is first and foremost a contest to be won by the government and the people of that country for themselves. [But] those engaged in external direction and supply [of the war in Vietnam] would do well to be reminded and to remember that this type of aggression is a deeply dangerous game.

It may be that the first of these sentences was the most significant in the long run. At the time, however, both the President and the public were more interested in the second sentence.

There is no doubt that Johnson intended this passage as a warning to the North Vietnamese and perhaps to the Chinese that the armed intervention he had been willing to think about in May, 1961, was still a possibility in his own mind. Just to dispel any doubt, Pierre Salinger, the White House Press Secretary, saw to it that White House reporters traveling with the President understood how important Johnson considered the statement.

Those who not only disagree with Johnson's policy in Vietnam as it has developed, but also feel that he duped them during the campaign and later betrayed their hopes, may be right on the facts, but it is a little too much to allow them to have it both ways. In fact, the protests of domestic doves following the Los Angeles speech were so great that Secretary Rusk called a news conference and denied any implication that the United States was planning to escalate the war. Even so, he carefully repeated that external support of the Viet Cong was a "serious business," but insisted: "Whatever happens in the north, there is a large problem in South Vietnam to be dealt with. . . . No miracle in the north is going to suddenly transform or eliminate the problem in South Vietnam."

Johnson himself let the impression get around that he did not understand how the press could have interpreted the UCLA speech as a threat to escalate. I spent an hour with him in his office four days after the speech and asked specifically for the President's own interpretation, and here are the notes taken on the response:

Asked him [LBJ] for his version of meaning of passage in UCLA speech. Never got it in so many words but did get long lecture on Vietnam. LBJ started by saying if Gen. Eisenhower had tried to invade Normandy the way we have tried to run the Vietnamese war, the Nazis would be in Paris today. Describes our situation in Vietnam as "new" because Lodge now has new general, new chief of mission, new CIA man, complete authority from LBJ. McN [McNamara] to look into new Lodge request, for more pay for the [Vietnamese] troops. So

in position to get something done. The policy there is to train Vietnamese troops to win their own war. Notes we already pulled out 1,000 men no longer needed. Says more can be pulled out as more Vietnamese get training. Praised Khanh [the latest general to have taken over in Saigon, Nguyen Khanh] as young, vigorous. Used analogy of somebody coming into my yard, burning my trees, killing my mother. Wouldn't that be a "deeply dangerous game?" But no suggestion in itself of expanding the war or enlarging American commitment. Implied criticism of Kennedy because we have mess on our hands over there.

The political situation in which Johnson found himself in February, 1964, was clearly not conducive to frank talk about a wider war in Vietnam. Even then, Goldwater was "pooping around" snow-covered New Hampshire, beginning the process of making himself an open and irresistible target for a "prudent" candidate, while horrifying much of the old-line Republican Party. Whatever Johnson may have been thinking privately, whatever the actual situation in Vietnam, the demands of politics — which is to say, the demands of men and circumstance — dictated that Johnson disclaim the intention, if not the possibility, of "going north." Just as Goldwater's campaign was being shaped in New Hampshire, so was Johnson's, in the response to his Los Angeles speech.

On June 28, however, Johnson gingerly warned again of the possibility of escalation. As more than fifty thousand people attending the *Svenskarnas Dag* (Swedes' Day) picnic listened in Minnehaha Park in Minneapolis, he said the United States, "when necessary," would not hesitate to "risk war" to preserve peace. This was a last-minute alteration of a prepared text which had declared that the United States "would use the force necessary" to maintain South Vietnam's freedom; some reporters already had filed stories based on the first text and all called attention to the change. The altered wording showed how politically delicate the matter was, but also that Johnson had not fundamentally changed the views he brought home from Southeast Asia in 1961.

The nation was "strong enough to protect ourselves and our allies," Johnson said, but it also was committed to "restraint in the use of power." It would never intervene in "honest clashes or belief or goals." But, he warned, "we seek neither dominion or conquest but where it exists we must work to dispel it." Both the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations had portrayed the war in Vietnam as, at least partially, an effort at "dominion or conquest" from the North, and thus the *Svenskarnas Dag* speech was essentially a repetition of the UCLA warning.

Up to this point, a nice ambiguity had been achieved about Vietnam; Johnson had promised to

support Saigon but had not made clear how far he was prepared to go militarily. But in August, with Goldwater nominated and campaigning against what he called the Administration's "no win" policy, with Johnson ready for his own anointment at Atlantic City, a startling development caused the President to make his attitude even clearer.

North Vietnamese gunboats attacked an American destroyer in the Gulf of Tonkin on August 2 without success. Johnson ordered American ships to destroy such attackers in the future. On August 4, new gunboat attacks were reported in the Gulf, and the President went even further. He ordered retaliatory air raids directly against North Vietnam. Explaining this action in a late-night television appearance on August 4, Johnson called the air raids a "positive reply" but said "we still seek no wider war." The next day, in a speech at Syracuse University, he added:

To any who may be tempted to support or to widen the present aggression, I say this: there is no threat to any peaceful power from the United States of America. But there can be no peace by aggression and *no immunity from reply*. And that is what is meant by the actions that we took yesterday. [Italics added.]

Whether there would be no immunity for whatever Johnson defined as aggression or just for attacks directly on the American flag, like those in the Tonkin Gulf, the President did not make clear — which, with Hanoi presumably listening, he could hardly have been expected to do. But the operative words *no immunity* were still another way of saying the same thing that had been said at Los Angeles and Minneapolis.

Johnson also seized the moment of the Tonkin crisis to send substantial new forces to Southeast Asia; these were primarily air and sea units, and their presence in the area was to play a large role in the future. Finally, he also used the episode to drive through Congress the celebrated resolution that gave him congressional authorization "to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and *to prevent future aggression*." (Italics added.)

In one stroke, Johnson had been able both to flex his muscles and prudently to limit what could have been a war-provoking crisis. One of his aides said later that one of the President's purposes had been "to win Republicans and conservatives with a responsible show of force. He already had the Left."

But the cost was high. The Tonkin crisis, however it seemed at the time, ultimately produced for Johnson two of his major difficulties. No doubt he handled it superbly; yet it would return again and again to haunt him because the circumstances that apply one day may be, usually will be, entirely

Here are 19 ways we could skim on this Bulova Watch.

1. We could use oil that costs a lot less than \$7,000 a gallon.

2. We could stop covering many key surfaces with a corrosion-resistant layer of nickel.

3. We could skip removing burrs from every part of the movement.

4. We could stop cleaning movements ultrasonically.

5. We could skip polishing some of the parts you never see, but they wouldn't work as well.

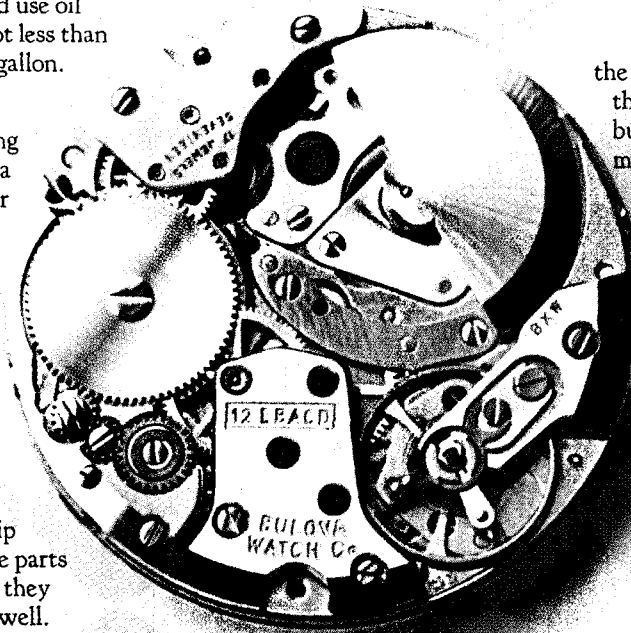
6. We could have parts exposed instead of protectively encased.

7. We don't have to use more gold on the case than government standards require. But a case wears better that way, especially around the edges.

8. We could hand-polish the case instead of diamond-polishing it, but it wouldn't be as lustrous.

We could use steel tools ad of expensive diamond ls to cut the bevel edge, ut the edge wouldn't be as smooth.

10. We could test every tenth watch for water-proofness instead of every watch.



11. We could add the oscillating weight onto the movement instead of building it right into the movement, but it would make the watch bulky.

12. We could use a guard pin that's easier to make but doesn't fit as well.

13. We could stop using a precision hairspring and buy one of lesser quality.

14. We could spend less on the shock-resistance unit, but it wouldn't take shocks as well as this one.

15. We could make crude punched holes instead of smooth shaved holes.

16. We could make a 3-piece case instead of a 1-piece case, but it wouldn't be as waterproof* and dustproof.

17. We could use embossed numerals instead of hand-applied numerals.

18. We could skip hand-polishing the numerals and hands, but why skim now?

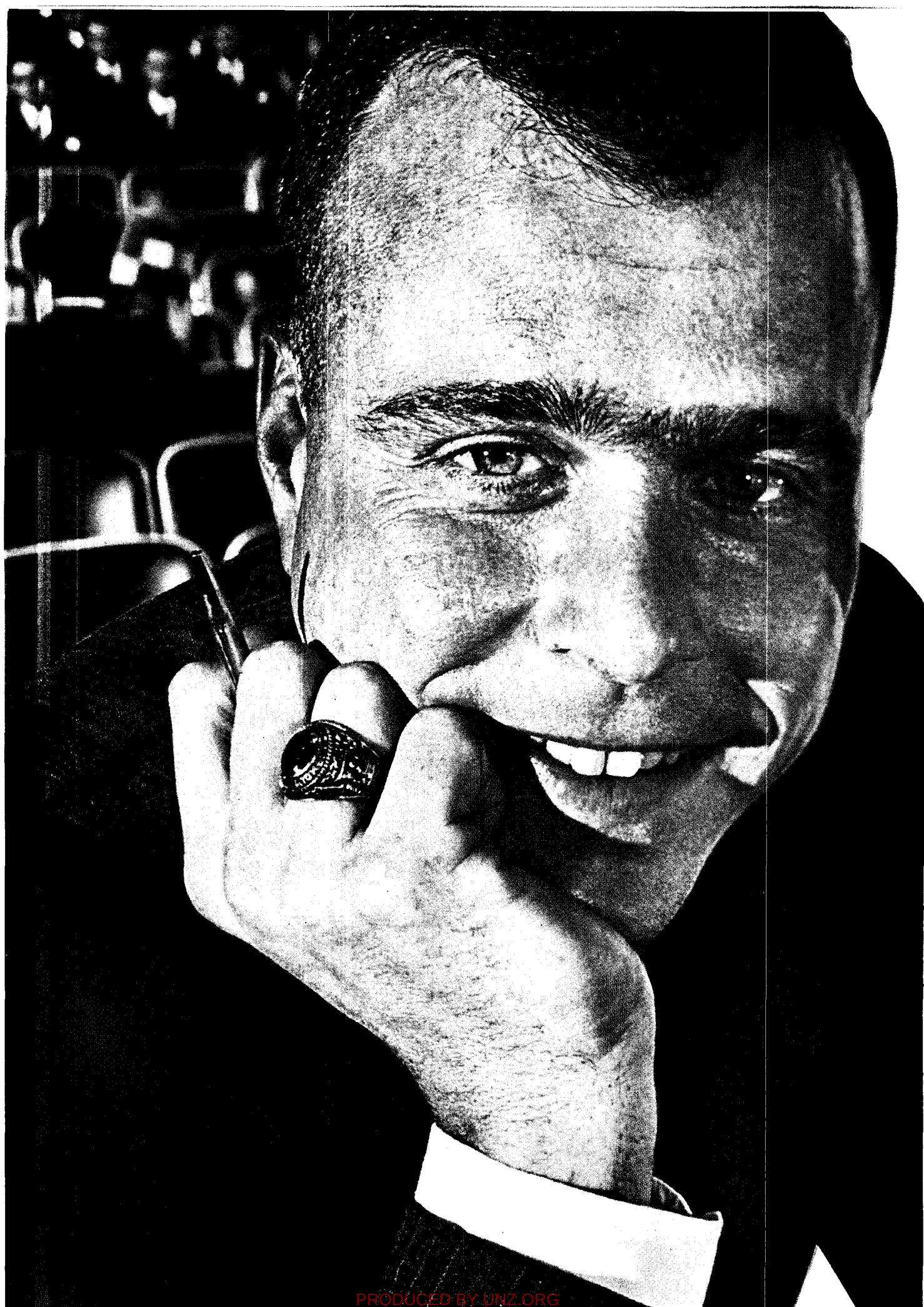
19. We could skip hand-brushing the dial, but then the face wouldn't be as beautiful.



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This man runs a “finishing” school that nobody ever finishes.

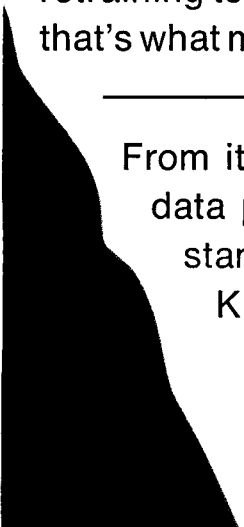
Technology in the data processing industry has developed at a remarkable pace. So fast, in fact, that computer salesmen must return to school regularly to keep up.

Bill Kramer runs one of these schools for IBM salesmen in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. Says Kramer, “A salesman never really finishes school because the industry just doesn’t stand still long enough. He has to know hundreds of pieces of equipment, his own and his competitors’, and scores of applications.

“Where computers were used mainly to handle routine things, like payroll, they are now doing such sophisticated jobs as helping to manufacture steel, and keeping track of airline reservations around the world.

“Fifteen years ago, there was only a handful of companies in the industry. Today, there are hundreds.

“In this kind of atmosphere—where many companies must innovate and improve all the time—it takes a lot of training and retraining to help a salesman do the best by his customers. And that’s what my job’s all about.”



From its very beginning less than two decades ago, the data processing industry and its customers have constantly come up with new ways to use computers. Bill Kramer is one of the many men and women in the industry who help bring these advances to more and more people every day.

"I have not yet, indeed, thought of a remedy for luxury..."

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

"I am not sure that in a great state it is *capable of a remedy*; nor that the evil is in itself always so great as it is represented.

"Suppose we include in the definition of luxury all *unnecessary expense*, and then let us consider whether laws to prevent such expense are possible to be executed in a great country, and whether, if they could be executed, our people generally would be happier, or *even richer*.

"Is not the hope of being one day able to purchase and enjoy luxuries, a great spur to labour and industry?

"May not luxury, therefore, produce more than it consumes, if, without such a spur, people would be, as they are naturally enough inclined to be, lazy and indolent? *To this purpose I remember a circumstance.*

"The skipper of a shallop, employed between Cape May and Philadelphia, had done us some small service, for which he refused to be paid. My wife, understanding that he had a daughter, sent her a present of a new-fashioned cap.

"*Three years after*, this skipper being at my house with an old farmer of Cape May, his passenger, he mentioned the cap, and how much his daughter had been pleased with it.

"'But' (said he) 'it proved a dear cap to our congregation.'

"How so?"

"'When my daughter appeared with it at meeting, it was so much admired, that all the girls resolved to get such caps from Philadelphia, and my wife and I computed that the whole could not have cost *less than a hundred pounds*.'

"'True', (said the farmer) 'but you do not tell all the story. I think the cap was nevertheless an advantage to us; for it was the first thing that put our girls upon knitting worsted mittens for sale at Philadelphia, that they might have wherewithal to buy caps and ribbons there; *and you know that the industry has continued*, and is likely to con-



Original wood engraving by Bernard Brussel-Smith

tinue and increase to a much greater value, and answer better purposes.'

"Upon the whole, I was more reconciled to this little piece of luxury, since not only the girls were made happier by having fine caps, but the Philadelphians by the supply of warm mittens."

"Poor Richard" put his finger on this simple key to an expanding economy over 200 years ago. So, isn't it strange to find people—well-meaning people—in this country today who still frown on the luxuries most of us work to enjoy? They want the government to restrict the broad range of products and services in the marketplace. And to cut back on advertising because it makes people want things they don't need.

Don't need? Well, of course, no little girl *needs* a bow in her hair. Yet, Mary Murphy will forever top off the apple of her eye with a ribbon. And where would the ribbon factories be without her? And the ribbon clerks?

It is just this very human desire to add the little frills to our living that has created our jobs and our prosperity . . . the ribbon factories and automobile factories and television factories . . . and the most dynamic economy in man's history. Shouldn't we be careful about how we tinker with the forces that have created all this? Because the simple, troubling truth is, nobody knows for sure how far you can regulate our economy without damaging it.

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different on another. And particularly in politics, what one does to achieve success may prove more important and lasting than the success itself.

With the resolution that the President maneuvered through Congress, and with the deception or guile — whatever description one chooses — that he used to keep it intact and his freedom of action unhampered, the most astute congressional strategist of our time planted the seeds of distrust and suspicion in that body. He alienated not just Senator Fulbright; in both houses, an undetermined but significant number of members came to look back upon the episode of the Tonkin Resolution as a ruthless power play and a betrayal of the congressional-executive trust.

The success of his response in the Tonkin Gulf would guide Johnson straight into an even more damaging mistake than his congressional tactics on behalf of the resolution. For the fact was that, having shown his strength, having diminished Goldwater's ability to charge him with a "no win" policy and with soft-headedness toward Communism, having established his own "restraint," Johnson seemed free to do what came so naturally to so political a creature. With every rattle of the Goldwater sword, every reference to the use of nuclear weapons by the Air Force general on the Republican ticket, every provocative remark about bombing the North from the avid jet pilot who was his opponent, Johnson was lured by politics into the profitably contrasting position of deploring — even forbidding — war, escalation, and nuclear brinkmanship. The Tonkin Gulf was the background against which he seemed able to do so safely; in the long run, it was the birthplace of the credibility gap.

ALL the evidence visible at the time, and much testimony gathered since, suggests that in 1964 Johnson was not deeply concerned about Vietnam. The excellent Rusk and McNamara, as well as Lodge's competent "new team," were on hand to handle it, and anyway, the "issue polls" Johnson studied with as much care as he gave to CIA reports showed that Vietnam, then, was the major concern of only a small proportion of the voters. There was no real fear in the White House that the war would become the central issue of the years ahead, that every word spoken now would have its later impact, and not always the one intended.

But if the war was not a matter of night-and-day care, the election was. For eminently practical political reasons, Johnson wanted to win a landslide. Believing as he did in his Populist, politician's heart that the best politics was to deliver "something for the folks," with his Great Society pro-

gram already being drawn up, Johnson recognized that he had the chance to break the decade-long deadlock of American politics; he could win the overwhelming mandate Kennedy had never had, swing Congress decisively as Eisenhower had never done, and deal with the backlog of urgent domestic business that had been piling up since the fifties. Then, like his idol, FDR, he could go on to break new ground.

Goldwater, in short, offered almost unlimited opportunity to a politician who had proved his skill in domestic affairs (the Kennedy tax and civil rights bills had been moved, the long-threatening railroad strike had been settled) and demonstrated both his strength and his restraint abroad; few men, certainly not hungry, mercurial Lyndon Johnson, could have resisted the openings offered, with Vietnam and peace in many ways the greatest of them. The President knew he had Goldwater on the ropes, knew he could be champion, perhaps the greatest of champions, when for so many years it had seemed impossible; and it was just not in him to stop punching or to pace his attack carefully. Thus, on September 25, Johnson declared:

We don't want our American boys to do the fighting for Asian boys. We don't want to get involved in a nation with 700 million people and get tied down in a land war in Asia.

And on September 28, with enthusiasm rising:

We are not going north and drop bombs at this stage of the game, and we are not going south and run out. . . . We are going . . . to try to get them to save their own freedom with their own men. . . .

And a little later, with Goldwater clearly in mind:

Sometimes our folks get a little impatient. Sometimes they rattle their rockets some, and they bluff about their bombs. But we are not about to send American boys nine or ten thousand miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves. . . . There is only one road to peace and that is to work at it patiently, deliberately, wisely, step by step, year by year, never to become reckless, never to become weary of the journey and irritated with folks who may not agree with you the first time you talk to them.

In the fall of 1964, Lyndon Johnson may or may not have known that he was not going to deliver on his promises that he would not "go north." He told the reliable Charles Roberts of *Newsweek* that he had decided to bomb North Vietnam as early as October, 1964. He told me in 1965 that as early as October, 1964, the targets had been chosen for attack, if bombing was ever decided upon. Given Johnson's obfuscation of his own motives and actions, and his occasional bombast, he may have been saying the same thing to both of us, in different ways. Contingency plans for bombing the North had been in existence for years;

planes were readily available, as the Gulf of Tonkin had demonstrated; as early as 1961, Walt W. Rostow had been an ardent advocate of bombing, and his proposals and justifications had been brought to Johnson's attention. General Taylor, who had succeeded Lodge as Ambassador to Saigon in 1965, advocated bombing strikes in October, 1964, after earlier opposition.

During the campaign, however it may have diverted his attention, Johnson — or any President — could not have failed to know that the situation in Vietnam was deteriorating. Nothing anywhere suggests that Johnson himself had fundamentally changed the view he had expressed in 1961 — that a “free” South Vietnam was vital to American interests and that, if necessary, “major American forces” would have to be committed to keep it “free.” Given everything, it is fair to say that if he did not know that he could not keep his promises not to “go north,” he certainly did not know that he *could* keep them.

In his search for personal vindication, for consensus, and for the power consensus would bring him, therefore, he had gone a step too far. He had transgressed the acceptable limits of his political reach. If he had not actually made up his mind what to do in South Vietnam, he had no way of knowing what might be required of a President who believed protecting it so vital to American interests. Yet, he could say: “As far as I am concerned, I want to be very cautious and careful, and use it only as a last resort, when I start dropping bombs around that are likely to involve American boys in a war in Asia with seven hundred million Chinese.”

But he was not that “cautious and careful” in what he said in his campaign, or in how he said it. And this would be what was remembered.

The drama of the confrontation with Goldwater, the monstrous outpouring of crowds, the posturing television images, the insistent words, the ever mounting ebullience of Lyndon Johnson, the souring, vaguely ominous tone of his opponent — all these combined to produce an enormous impact on the public, as a presidential campaign usually does. In that impact, the earlier warnings, the carefully maintained ambiguity of policy for the sake of consensus, the clear suggestions of what might have to be done, all were forgotten by President and public alike. Lyndon Johnson was promising peace, and Barry Goldwater was promising war; the President had shoved in all his stack; that was the effect on men, and in the endless adventure it is not the fact, so much as the impression, that controls.

“It seems,” Lyndon Johnson told reporters on election night at the LBJ Ranch, near where he had grown up in the dust and poverty of the hill

country, “that I have spent my life getting ready for this moment.” And as the returns poured in, state after state falling into his column, the electoral total mounting, the great sweep developing, governors, senators, congressmen, members of legislatures riding in on his coattails, that long wait seemed eminently worthwhile. Everything seemed justified because it was the greatest election victory in history. The deadlock was smashed; the consensus was built; the Great Society was on the way; and Lyndon Johnson, the accidental President, would belong to the ages.

But history played a demonic joke upon Lyndon Johnson and, therefore, upon us all. Once, in 1964, he had told some reporters he had invited for lunch that he did not intend to make the mistake that he believed had ruined Franklin Roosevelt's second term. “Roosevelt was never President after 1937 until the war came along,” he said. Lyndon Johnson would not forget the limits of power; he would not carelessly throw away the fruits of his great victory for some unattainable goal, as Roosevelt had done in trying to pack the Supreme Court.

But he did.

HANOI and Saigon, of course, had heard the campaign oratory too. By the time the election was over, South Vietnam was in deep political and military trouble and its American advisers were nearing despair. A succession of coups in Saigon had resulted neither in political progress toward needed reforms and stability nor in military advances. Diem had been followed by chaos. Neither the Viet Cong nor the North Vietnamese had failed to take advantage of this situation.

Militarily, the Viet Cong were mounting ever bigger and more successful battles, and the evidence suggested that they were getting more and more help from North Vietnam. Deliveries of weapons and supplies apparently had increased, although there are no reliable figures to suggest by how much. So, apparently, had the infiltration of North Vietnamese fighting men, although here again the figures are fuzzy. On July 10, 1967, the Defense Department gave the following infiltration figures for the period.

November 1964	800
December 1964	800
Total 1964	12,500
January 1965	2000
Total 1965	26,000

Whether or not these figures are precise, there is little reason to doubt that they give a fairly accurate picture of increasing infiltration, which was getting to be a serious matter by the beginning of 1965. The United States itself had put in an additional

five to six thousand troops in August, 1964, though not ostensibly for purposes of combat, and as the war seemed to be moving toward a showdown, the North Vietnamese would have had every reason to increase the military pressure in the South, and the NLF to welcome the assistance.

Two days before the American election, Viet Cong mortars had destroyed six B-57 bombers and killed five Americans in a surprise attack on the South Vietnamese air base at Bienhoa. Lyndon Johnson had done nothing — not surprisingly, from an American point of view, because as the campaign had developed it might have been a bad risk for him to have launched even limited reprisal air raids that close to Election Day; his image as a “man of prudence” might have been shaken, and although the election surely could not have been lost, Johnson was by then in no mood to jeopardize even one vote. He wanted them all.

But it is also not surprising if Hanoi and the NLF drew their own conclusions. Bienhoa was a more costly attack than the one in the Tonkin Gulf — a Communist victory, in fact, resulting in dismaying American losses. Since it was generally believed that the American bombers were at Bienhoa to impress the North Vietnamese with the potential of American air power, and since they had been placed there as part of the response to the Tonkin Gulf crisis, the mortar attack could have been nothing but a direct challenge to the United States — the sort of thing Johnson had said would be accorded “no immunity.” American men were killed, and that made it surely the kind of attack on American forces that the Tonkin Resolution had authorized him to “take all necessary steps” to repel. But he did not act.

These events, taken with the general tone of Johnson’s campaigning in the final months against Goldwater, can have had no other effect in Hanoi except to convince Ho Chi Minh’s government that it could step up the level of its military effort to a final push in 1965 without danger of major American intervention. A mortar attack directly on an American billet in Saigon just before Christmas also drew no American response; Johnson is reported to have been reluctant to shatter the Christmas season with warlike acts, or to dispel the general good feeling of his pre-inaugural period; but again, the North Vietnamese were unlikely to take such considerations into account. It is no wonder that in January, according to the figures quoted above, the first big increase in infiltration into the South could be counted, or that General Taylor’s intelligence agents had detected whole North Vietnamese units gathering for the kill. Hanoi had decided it had the green light.

This interpretation is supported by events in Saigon and elsewhere. As 1964 turned to 1965,

seldom if ever had there been such unrest and turmoil in that unhappy capital. It is not part of this narrative to trace the bewildering successions of governments, uprisings, riots, resignations, statements, and outside influences at work, but in sum, a powerful anti-American, neutralist sentiment was visible, with Buddhist street mobs its most dramatic instrument; a strong South Vietnamese anti-Communist military bloc opposed it; and insofar as the outside world could judge, there seemed to be a climactic struggle between these elements for power. Some Americans in Saigon actively feared the emergence of a Buddhist-neutralist government that would seek peace with the NLF.

IN THE world at large, both De Gaulle of France and U Thant of the United Nations were seeking negotiated peace, and it even appeared to some that the Soviet Union was in the same mood; *Izvestia* called for a Johnson-Kosygin meeting, and Peking was alarmed enough to accuse the new Soviet leaders of practicing “Khrushchevism without Khrushchev.” Both in Saigon and elsewhere, it was apparently believed that Johnson, as he had seemed to say in the campaign, would countenance no “wider war” and that peace, therefore, was the realistic alternative.

At home, too, involvement in Vietnam was not popular. The Gallup poll for November 29, 1964, reported that 50 percent of the respondents believed the United States had handled Vietnam badly; in January, Lou Harris showed that 23 percent wanted to “negotiate and get out,” and another 40 percent were willing to do no more than “hold the line.” A few respected Senate voices — Mike Monroney of Oklahoma and John Sherman Cooper of Kentucky, for instance — were expressing public doubts.

On its face, it might therefore seem that here was a second moment, somewhat comparable with that following the fall of Diem, when peace could have been had in Vietnam.

Johnson, it well may be, could have found a reasonable excuse for disengagement. He could have pointed out that there was evidently in Saigon neither sufficient will to win the war nor anything resembling the free government and free people for whose benefit both he and Kennedy had maintained the war was being fought. Following the theme Kennedy had insisted upon, and which Johnson had sounded fervently in the closing stages of his campaign, he could have said that it was a war for Asian boys to win; that the United States was willing to lend technical and material support, but since the Asian boys and their leaders displayed too little concern whether they won or not, the United States thought it the better part of good

policy not to send good money — much less men — after bad. It is even possible, considering the state of things in Saigon and how the United States had influenced events at the time of the Diem overthrow, that a government could have been nudged into power that would have announced peace aims and made further United States participation a moot question.

Johnson not only had this on-scene situation within which to operate in the weeks following his election; he also had a solid domestic position to cover any retreat. He could have extricated himself from the war with less difficulty, probably, than De Gaulle had had during the Algerian disengagement. The Texan had won the most enormous political victory any President ever had; his mandate was unchallenged. He had spared the country Goldwater, and the collective sigh of relief was as audible as any political sentiment of this century. The response to Johnson's "peace" statements on Vietnam during the campaign, while not universal, were as near an expression of solid public support as most Presidents ever get. The Republicans and the Southern Democrats, the only conceivable organized political powers that could have objected, had been shattered in the one case and badly shaken in the other. Never again would Lyndon Johnson have anything approaching the "free hand" that the 1964 elections gave him in the opening months of 1965.

In his State of the Union Message that January, Johnson himself made it clear where he wanted to go. He propounded a sweeping program of domestic reform, and, as he later would do in his Inaugural, called for rapprochement and a pooling of energies with the Soviet Union for peaceful purposes. A major war in Vietnam could do little to advance — it would actively pervert — both his domestic and his international purposes, particularly his desire to end the cold war and cooperate with the Soviets. Given the activities of U Thant, France, and the Soviet Union, it is likely that a strong Johnson move toward a negotiated settlement would have met some international cooperation that might have borne fruit; U Thant, for one, is convinced that it would have.

There probably had been no other point in the Vietnamese involvement, as we have seen, when the American effort seemed so near to abject failure. Political chaos in Saigon; apathy toward the war evident among the South Vietnamese populace; corruption everywhere; an aggressive Viet Cong pushing its sanguinary efforts in the countryside; tough North Vietnamese units and replacements arriving in force to help the insurgents; and the South Vietnamese Army badly, if not criminally, led by an inept, closed, and politically divided officer corps: these facts meant that a

major defeat was at hand unless something was done, soon, and in Washington. And more than a year earlier, that grim November afternoon in the Executive Office Building, Lyndon Johnson had told Cabot Lodge, "*I am not going to be the President who saw Southeast Asia go the way China went.*"

Lyndon Johnson was personally and politically committed. Steeped in and shaped by the cold war era of American history, a devout believer in the "domino theory" and the evil intentions of Communism, he was not looking for a way out; he was looking for a way to win, or at least to get the terms he believed were necessary.

The important thing, therefore, was that Johnson had no bargaining position whatever in Vietnam. In early 1965, he was on the edge of defeat and toppling over, and Ho Chi Minh knew it as well as he did. Given a little more strength, a little better field position, it might have been possible even for sincere anti-Communists like Johnson and Rusk to have made a pragmatic settlement, as the best of a bad bargain, on which the face of victory might have been painted. But the only way Lyndon Johnson or any other President could have negotiated his way out of Vietnam early in 1965 was by the virtual surrender of the anti-Communist government in Saigon and the abandonment of the American commitment to it.

Political negotiations, after all, do not create new situations; they only ratify power relationships that already exist. A negotiated settlement of any controversy is a ratification of the status quo (unless one side or the other foolishly gives away its position). In early 1965, the power relationship that existed was that North Vietnam and the NLF had all but won their war; they were in general control of South Vietnam outside Saigon, and any conceivable negotiation would inevitably give that status quo legal as well as de facto standing. Lyndon Johnson not only knew that better than anyone; he believed that to permit such a conclusion to the Vietnamese affair would be disastrous abroad and politically explosive at home.

Johnson was confronting the new Soviet regime of Brezhnev and Kosygin, and he wanted them to be under no illusions about the strength and determination of the man in the White House, just as Kennedy, after Vienna, had desperately wanted to prove his steadfastness and nerve to Khrushchev. This concern on the part of Johnson was neither idle nor vain. To the extent that power is a determining force in the affairs of men — and who would deny that that is a great extent? — one of the essential ingredients of power is its credibility. Power has no meaning if it will not or cannot be used, and not all of America's might would have impressed the Soviet leaders had they

believed Johnson feared or had not the political ability to use it.

After the long campaign of 1964, with Johnson in the role of peace candidate, there might well have been a question in Moscow on that point. It was sound diplomacy, as Johnson saw it, to remove any doubt about his willingness to stand fast when challenged. Moreover, it was characteristic of his whole experience in politics that, having established in his campaign a position of moderation and restraint on the war, he then faced the other way and set about proving his readiness and ability to use his power when he had to.

But Johnson was not concerned merely with his own position, important as that was in the world, and particularly in the eyes of his Soviet counterparts. On October 16, 1964, as he and Goldwater drew near the end of their one-sided contest, the Chinese Communists had exploded a nuclear device in the interior of Asia; the increased power and prestige that immediately accrued to Peking were a new factor in the balance of forces in Asia. Believing, as Johnson did, in the threat of Asian or any kind of Communism, he could only have seen an American withdrawal from, or compromise in, Vietnam as a further, and unacceptable, gain for the Chinese.

As he had in 1961, he saw the containment of Communist expansion and influence in Southeast Asia as a necessity of American national security, and he saw South Vietnam also as the key "domino," not only in Asia but in the whole string of American commitments upon the credibility of which — so Johnson and Dean Rusk believed — world peace depended. If he pulled out of Vietnam, he believed, Communism, seen almost as a mystic force rather than as a policy of national states, would in swift progression outflank Thailand, menace the Malaysian peninsula and Indonesia, surround India, and throw the American line of influence, perhaps even defense, back somewhere into the Pacific. Wars of liberation, vindicated as a technique, would spring up like bonfires throughout the underdeveloped world. Even Europe might be in difficulties because the American commitment to defend it, and particularly West Berlin, was a key factor in its security; and Johnson believed that if he pulled out of Vietnam ignominiously, no one, least of all Brezhnev and Kosygin, would believe that he would honor a commitment anywhere.

Johnson played it safe as he began his full term. There would be as little break with the Kennedy image as possible. That meant not only that the "commitment" of Eisenhower and Kennedy to

South Vietnam had to be honored — one might find a way to escape that kind of entanglement — but it meant also that Rusk and McNamara and Bundy and Maxwell Taylor, and ultimately, even Cabot Lodge, would still be there. The architects of the Vietnamese involvement would be Johnson's advisers in the new circumstances created by his landslide, just as they had been Kennedy's in the fall of 1961 and Johnson's in November, 1963.

Among Johnson's high-level advisers, only Undersecretary of State George Ball openly took the negative on Vietnam. In October, 1964, he had sent the President a hundred-page memorandum advocating a withdrawal from the "gluepot" of Indochina; or, if that could not be done, at least a concentration upon the ground war in South Vietnam itself rather than "going north" with air power. Ball's memo thus confirms the fact that even before the election, while Johnson was still assuring the voters that he did not want to "start dropping bombs around" in an Asian war, an air attack against North Vietnam was considered likely enough by a sub-Cabinet officer to get up a major argument against it.

But Ball was only one among many, and Johnson's decision to retain the Kennedy Cabinet deprived him, practically speaking, of much of the political freedom a landslide election in his own right had provided. He might talk to reporters about "keeping his options open," but he already had limited them severely for the sake of political continuity. The men with the greatest vested interest in winning the war, and in demonstrating its rightness, would continue to be his principal advisers — advocates as well as judges, fact-finders as well as fact-weighers — on war policy.

Several officials who were close to Johnson at that time also recall the sheer ebullience of the moment. One of them had also served Kennedy and remembers the same sense of omnipotence in the White House in early 1961. "Everything had always worked out for us," he said. "The primaries, the convention, the debates with Nixon, the confrontation with the Houston ministers, the election itself. We thought we had the golden touch. It was just like that with Johnson after 'sixty-four.'"

In Kennedy's case, the sense of the golden touch vanished at the Bay of Pigs, never really to return. But by January, 1965, Lyndon Johnson had even more reason for sheer confidence in his ability to make things come right. He had maintained the government in an hour of crisis, taken over the Democratic Party from the Kennedys, pushed through the legislation John Kennedy couldn't (as Johnson saw it), crushed Goldwater, and won the White House with the biggest vote margin in history.

People who have known Johnson the longest

maintain without exception that he is at his best when the going is toughest — as, for instance, when he had a Democratic majority of only one senator in 1957, or just after he succeeded Kennedy in the White House. Richard Nixon put it another way during the campaign of 1964. He was working as hard for Goldwater as he could, he said privately, because as a political realist he was most afraid of a Johnson landslide. He had observed Johnson over many years in the Senate, and he agreed with Johnson's friends. When the going was hardest, when there were practical restraints on him, Johnson was an exceptionally able leader; but when he was powerful enough to have a free hand, Johnson lost his otherwise sure touch, and his vanity and mercurial temperament were likely to take charge of him.

IF JOHNSON nevertheless maintained most of his habitual political caution as 1965 opened, that had little to do with his attitude on military operations in Vietnam. He might worry about Republicans being able to charge him with softness, but he had no fear that Americans would condemn a fight against Communism, or that their soldiers could not win a war.

It would be too much to suggest, in the light of the Korean War and of the French experience in Indochina (not to mention the American experience to that point in South Vietnam), that Johnson or his advisers thought the war could be easily or quickly won by an American intervention. But the history of the war, one of these men has said in retrospect, is "a search for the quick fix." It has been one effort after another to force a quick end to a situation that cannot even be sharply defined, much less circumscribed. Men in Washington now understand, a great deal more clearly than they did in early 1965, that the war in Vietnam is neither as simple as a rebellion nor as clear as an aggression. It is an immensely complicated struggle, with historical and social as well as political and economic roots, a terribly total, but curiously limited, war in which military power is only one of the weapons needed. Even in its strictly military aspects, it is not necessarily a war in which firepower and sophisticated equipment and tons of supplies (in all of which twentieth-century American armies specialize) can be decisive.

But how could Lyndon Johnson, in his moment of triumph, with his sense of the golden touch, doubt that his superbly equipped forces, representing all the technological and industrial genius of America, organized by the incomparable McNamara, with his modern administrator's skills, trained and led by the impressive generals and

admirals with whom Johnson had conspired politically in his congressional days, backed by the most powerful industrial capacity and the most impressive economy in history — how could he doubt that this juggernaut could deal with a few ill-clad guerrillas, if necessary with the old-fashioned Chinese-style infantry divisions of Vo Nguyen Giap, with an enemy who had to steal his weapons, bring in his supplies on bicycles and the backs of old women, and whose soldiers were regimented Communist slaves without the incentives of freedom and democracy to make them fight well?

As for the political aspect of the thing, was not Lyndon Johnson the man who had brought the R.E.A. to Texas? He knew how to deliver the political goods to the people. And once America brought its famous know-how to the task of raising the Vietnamese standard of living, the Saigon government ought to have no more difficulty winning the loyalties of the people than LBJ had had in getting elected to Congress down in the hill country.

And there is something else, too, something that must be discussed delicately, but discussed nevertheless. Lyndon Johnson was not then, and is not now, a racist, or even an imperialist. He was and is, however, a fervently nativist American who still, in the White House, could remember and recite his childhood oration from George Frisbie Hoare, the famous encomium to the colors that includes the phrase ". . . the fairest vision on which these eyes ever looked was the flag of my country in a foreign land," and whose patriotism and conviction of his country's superior virtues were passionate and instinctive.

He was and is a man of the South in whom the heritage of Ol' Massa has been overcome but not forgotten, as it never can be by any Southerner. He was and is a child, too, of Texas and Colonel Colt, influences just as powerful. He was and is a man, therefore, of power and pride, and the latter will not brook much hindrance of the former, particularly from men who, though not perhaps inferior, still have to be reminded from time to time of the realities of things:

They'll come right into your yard and take it over if you let them. And the next day they'll be right up on your porch, barefoot and weighing one hundred and thirty pounds and they'll take that too. But if you say to 'em right at the start, "hold on, just wait a minute," they'll know they're dealing with somebody who'll stand up. And after that you can get along fine.

The enemy in Vietnam was barefoot and weighed one hundred and thirty pounds. He was the kind of man who might be fine in his place, who could be a useful citizen and a good friend if he let you train him right and help him a little, but who would take over your front porch if you didn't

stand up to him. Lyndon Johnson was not about to let little brown men who skulked in the jungle do that to him and to the United States of America, and he was not capable of believing that the bare-foot guerrillas might try to take the front porch anyway, even if told to "hold on, just wait a minute." The French had had no helicopters and no aircraft carriers and no political backing at home, and Ho Chi Minh could deal with *them*, all right. But when it came to the full might of the U.S.A. — when God's country struck with the righteous wrath of freedom aroused — surely then it would be Glory, Glory Hallelujah, as it had been in every war in American history. And that symbolic flag of George Frisbie Hoare's fervent oratory again would be "terrible as a meteor."

It seemed then that it might not even be necessary to send in American troops, although Ball, dissenting as usual, had argued that if there was to be an intervention, it ought to be on the ground in the South, where he thought the war would be won or lost. But that would guarantee ugly casualty lists, for one thing. For another, a generation of Americans had been brought up on the proposition that never again should their troops get embroiled in a land war on the continent of Asia, as they had been in the stalemate in Korea.

Air power was cheaper. It was what the South Vietnamese officers wanted. It was most acceptable in Congress, where for years airmen had lobbied assiduously and well. It would engage a Navy impatient for a piece of the action, with its carriers already steaming in the Tonkin Gulf. Air and sea power, after all, were the great American assets in the Pacific area; why not fight one's own war rather than Giap's?

Kept away from sensitive areas along the Yunnan border, moreover, air raids also were less likely than a troop commitment to alarm the enigmatic Chinese into the kind of massive retaliation they had launched when American forces in Korea had approached the Yalu River in 1950.

Besides, the enemy in North Vietnam had not yet felt the sting of war. It cost Hanoi little to sponsor and support terrorism and guerrilla action in the South. If the scourge of war could be carried to Ho Chi Minh and the zealots of his government, not just to their troops and agents far off in the South, they would get a clear and painful idea of what their ambitions could cost. There would be "no sanctuary" in North Vietnam, and that would make it an entirely different war.

ALL in all, air power appeared on its face to be the quickest way to meet the main need of the moment, which was bolstering the morale and

prestige of the anti-neutralist South Vietnamese Army and government factions and keeping them in control in Saigon. This was necessary if the war was even to be continued, let alone concluded advantageously.

Still, Inauguration Day passed, and Johnson had made only a characteristically limited commitment to the air power advocates. But at some point during these turn-of-the-year months, he had agreed with his military advisers that deliberate attacks on Americans (as distinguished from attacks on South Vietnamese which might incidentally kill Americans) would be answered with air strikes against the North. That was no more than implementing the pledge of the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, and the action would be modeled on the Tonkin Gulf retaliation, which had pleased the President with its blending of power and restraint.

This limited commitment again was predictable, given Lyndon Johnson's political *modus operandi*. He was under military pressure to bomb; he was under political pressure for restraint; every instinct derived from his lifelong war of political survival told him to alienate neither force but to placate both with half a loaf for each. In his retaliation decision, he found the middle ground, that comfortable territory on which he saw no reason not to stand in Vietnam, as he had always stood in Texas and in the Senate.

A more sweeping policy of bombing the North, in general punishment for what it was supposed to be doing in the South, had long been advocated by Walt W. Rostow, among others. The President, although deeply concerned at the possibility of a South Vietnamese collapse, was not willing, as February began, to undertake such a portentous campaign. McGeorge Bundy was in Saigon, however, on a mission partially designed to determine whether general air attacks as recommended by Rostow ought to be launched.

The question was never answered. On February 7, vicious Viet Cong mortar fire came down on the American Special Forces camp at Pleiku, and Viet Cong infiltrators breached the South Vietnamese security perimeter to blow up several aircraft. Eight Americans were killed, and 108 others were injured. This case fitted the circumstances under which Johnson had decided to retaliate against North Vietnam enough so that, on the same day, with Bundy urging him on by overseas telephone, air strikes were launched by forty-nine carrier planes against staging areas and base camps around Donghoi in North Vietnam, just above the Demilitarized Zone. A second wave of South Vietnamese planes, escorted by American jets, struck the Vinhlinh communications center, even nearer the DMZ, on February 8.

These raids against the North, according to the official White House statement, were "in response to provocations ordered and directed by the Hanoi regime," which had been reported by American intelligence as ordering "a more aggressive course of action against both South Vietnamese and American installations."

The statement also contained the official rationale for attacking the North Vietnamese in response to Viet Cong attacks in the South: "These attacks were only made possible by the continuing infiltration of personnel and equipment from North Vietnam. This infiltration markedly increased during 1964 and continues to increase."

Official after official, in public and in private testimony, explained at the time that the Pleiku raids had been an open and direct challenge of American will and purpose, ordered by Hanoi and carried out on Hanoi's orders; the resulting air raids had been a "limited and fitting response." Even George Ball, no doubt reflecting sadly on his hundred-page memorandum of October, 1964, testified loyally at a news conference that the Administration had had no choice but to respond, so that Hanoi could not mistake American intentions, so that American lives could be protected.

"Secret intelligence," of course, was adduced to prove that Hanoi had planned and precipitated this test. Nevertheless, Charles Mohr, a reporter who had spent enough time in Vietnam to have a sense of its complexity and who was, in February, 1965, the White House correspondent of the *New York Times* (later, he returned to Saigon), analyzed the Administration explanations skeptically in a *Times* article on February 8:

The Administration contention clearly is that North Vietnam made possible the attack on Pleiku. But the questions about the incident grow out of the apparent fact that a small Vietcong unit, armed with captured [American] weapons and protected by a lack of field intelligence on the part of the South Vietnamese Army, succeeded in creeping onto the American base and dealing a bloody blow.

Thus the final question is how much of the responsibility for Pleiku can be laid not just to Hanoi but to a failure to prosecute the antiguerrilla war in South Vietnam itself in a more vigorous and successful way.

And one Administration official, asked why Pleiku had been considered more of a North Vietnamese challenge than Bienhoa (two days before the election), replied: "There's a limit to America's patience. When the attack was repeated, and repeated under those circumstances, there was no alternative."

Another official put it more bluntly. "They were hitting us," he said, "and we asked ourselves, 'Why the hell don't we hit them one?'"

Still, there was something ambiguous about this

first attack on the North. There was unquestionably an element of retaliation about it, just as advertised. The attack on Pleiku was certainly the latest of a series, and the usually imperturbable McGeorge Bundy, who was on the scene shortly after the night battle, gave an emotional report on the carnage; weeks later, in his White House office, he could still speak to me with obvious feeling of the President's right and duty to protect American boys against being butchered in their tents. Soviet Premier Kosygin also was in Hanoi at the time, and there were those in the Administration who believed that to suffer the Pleiku attack without response would only permit Hanoi to argue to him that American power in Southeast Asia was a paper tiger; hence Kosygin might be more inclined to help along the Communist war effort, scornful of American response and moving *ipso facto* nearer Peking in the process.

THE rationale of retaliation, however, was subject to serious doubt from the start. For one thing, only twelve hours elapsed between the beginning of the Pleiku attack and the American strike on Donghoi; many critics doubted whether a policy determination as well as a combat operation could have been put together so quickly.

These doubts have been greatly strengthened in many minds by subsequent events. On February 14, for instance, while the headlines still glared, General Taylor said in an interview on CBS television that future attacks on the North would be determined "by the behavior of the Hanoi government." Adlai Stevenson had already said, in a letter to the United Nations Security Council president, Roger Seydoux of France, that despite the retaliatory attacks the United States had no intention of carrying on a general air war over North Vietnam.

Yet, writing for his book, published two years later, in February, 1967, General Taylor never mentioned retaliation. Explaining the origins of the bombing, he wrote:

The first reason was to let the people of South Vietnam feel that for the first time, after eleven years of bitter warfare, they were striking back against the source of all their troubles. . . . The second reason for our use of our air power was a military one. It was to utilize superiority in the air to strike military targets which, if destroyed, would have the effect of restraining or making more difficult the infiltration of men and supplies from North Vietnam to South Vietnam. . . . The third reason for the air campaign . . . was to remind the leadership in Hanoi, the men who were directing the war in the South, that little by little through the progressive, restrained application of force by bombing, they would pay an ever-increasing price for a continuation of their aggression in the South.

And when a member of the White House staff later in 1965 asked McGeorge Bundy for a guidance memo on why the bombing of the North was necessary, Bundy's reply cited the first two reasons advanced by Taylor in his book, and added another — to convince Hanoi that the United States intended to make good its commitment to South Vietnam.

By the spring of 1965, moreover, there were plenty of officials in the Administration who would confide that the *real* value of the bombing was as a "bargaining card"; that is, they said, it was something that could be traded at the proper time for value received. The destruction being wrought on North Vietnam could be used in a negotiation to offset the military superiority then enjoyed by Communist forces in the South. Barely three months after the Pleiku response — on May 13 — President Johnson ordered the first "pause" in the bombing, an obviously diplomatic move; nothing happened, and the bombers went back to work on May 19.

There was a glaring weakness, in fact, in the Administration's own statement about retaliation for direct attacks on American troops. McNamara inadvertently made that weakness public on February 7 when, in response to a news-conference questioner who asked how the Viet Cong had been able to penetrate the base defenses at Pleiku, he said he did not believe "it will ever be possible to protect our forces against sneak attacks of that kind."

The hard-hitting Viet Cong quickly confirmed this. On February 10, three days after the Pleiku attack and the first wave of "retaliatory" raids against Donghoi, the guerrillas launched another assault, this time against American barracks at Quinhon. They blew up the barracks, killed nineteen Americans, wounded thirteen, and got away.

The next day, 160 American and South Vietnamese planes bombed barracks and staging areas in Chanhhoa and Chaple, North Vietnam, again in "retaliation." The essential absurdity of the scheme could not have been made plainer. McNamara had pointed out that there could be no base security in the South while the guerrillas were free to operate; yet, once retaliation had been publicly pledged after Pleiku, for every attack on Americans there would have to be a response directly against North Vietnam. If that were not so, whatever deterrent value, whatever credibility for American determination, whatever boost for South Vietnamese morale had been gained at Pleiku would have been dissipated, and in effect, a gigantic American bluff would have been called with impunity. Such a paper-tiger effect would surely generate even more attacks against Americans.

On the other hand, to strike back only when struck was ridiculous and impossible. It handed

the enemy the initiative. It made the lives of American boys a sort of trigger for American air raids. It gave over to the Viet Cong the decision whether an American air raid could be launched against North Vietnam. Retaliation was simply untenable, and even the word could be justified only if it were a "cover," a sugar coating, for the launching of a general air bombardment of North Vietnam; and only then if that bombardment could ultimately be shown to be a justified, logical, and feasible military strategy designed to bring the war to a close.

But the bombing was not that, either. The Pleiku raids were neither purely spontaneous retaliation, as the Administration at first fatuously insisted; nor were they, as this lack of candor suggested to so many critics, the first step in a long-planned, carefully conceived air campaign against North Vietnam, a campaign the launching of which had only awaited some such pretext as Pleiku.

THE truth is characteristically Johnsonian; it lies somewhere between these poles. Johnson *had* decided that air strikes were needed, primarily to boost South Vietnamese morale and confound the neutralists, secondarily to protect American troops, and incidentally to make life and war more difficult for Ho Chi Minh and his government. But with a wary eye on public opinion in the United States and a healthy respect for the potency of peace as a political issue, in his established pattern of going two ways at once, as a man of restraint as well as power, he had not been willing by the time of Pleiku to order a general air bombardment — to order the bombing of the North, in a phrase Richard Nixon was then using, "day by day, and for that matter, night by night" until its collapse.

The raids, then, were both agreed upon in advance *and* retaliatory; just as Stevenson wrote Seydoux, Johnson then had not ordered continuing overall aerial warfare. In his first great test as a war President, he was relying upon his tried and true method. He would bomb, all right, but he would not really turn the bombers loose. He would retaliate, but he would not initiate. He would show his muscle but only suggest how tough he could be if he really tried; as Taylor said in his February 14 broadcast, the raids were "deliberately planned . . . to suggest the possibility of other and bigger forms of reaction."

Wars are not elections in Texas, however, and what suffices in one theater will not necessarily do in the other. A former official who participated in the post-Pleiku discussions has privately described what happened on February 7, 1965:

We began the bombing with no philosophy of what we were doing. We didn't necessarily even intend to start a campaign. We ignored the difficulty of halting the natural growth of something once started, and we considered the whole thing too much in terms of immediate effect and not enough in terms of long-range problems.

A policy, by definition, is a course of action intended to produce a desired end at an acceptable cost. Bombing the North might have formed such a policy had it been believed in the Johnson Administration, however erroneously, that the assault eventually would cause Hanoi to sue for peace on terms advantageous to the United States; but *that* policy would have required the difficult, dangerous, and repugnant decision to launch the "strategic bombing" of populations and cities, as well as the tactical bombing of "military targets."

Bombing might also have been a policy, in the true sense, had it been aimed at interdicting every route from the North into the South — stopping at the border or beyond every man and ounce of material coming down in aid of the NLF, sealing off the indigenous part of the war from any outside aid and sponsorship. But the bombing was never so aimed, and no military man was foolish enough to maintain that air power could close mountain and jungle trails to men carrying mortar shells on their backs or to old women trotting under chogi sticks loaded at both ends with sacks of ammunition, much less to battalions of determined, hardy soldiers slipping one by one through the hills to a prearranged rendezvous in the South. McNamara, for one, never contended that air power could cause any worthwhile reduction in the amount of supplies and the number of men being sent from North to South; he said only that it would make it more difficult and costly to get them there, and no doubt it has.

In either case, however, the bombing would have been aimed at ending the war at an acceptable cost, and that would have been a policy, however bloody or futile it might have proved. So would Ball's alternative suggestion of a commitment of combat troops to help the South Vietnamese Army. Control of the South Vietnamese populace, after all, was what the war was about. Johnson might have taken a real step forward in that struggle by making a troop commitment before the full weight of the North Vietnamese intervention cited by Taylor could have been brought to bear. He might even have staved off a major part of the ultimate infiltration of North Vietnamese troop units, by

giving Hanoi a clear signal of his determination to fight, and by getting superior forces on the scene "fustest with the mostest." A troop commitment at that time, moreover, might have been defended against adverse American and world opinion; the troops would have been fighting *in the South*, in defense, against men who could be clearly pictured as invaders.

If North Vietnam actually was responsible for the war in the South — and with the political campaign over, the Administration insisted that Hanoi was responsible — it perhaps made some sense to "raise the price of aggression" to Ho Chi Minh. But to punish him for what he was supposed to be doing would not necessarily make him stop it, unless the punishment was total; and vengeance is not a worthy or sensible reason for making war.

Moreover, meting out punishment in this world of sin and sadness demands an Olympian regard for one's own purity that bodes ill for one's judgment; and it is a dubious psychological proposition, anyway. A nation assaulted by another, with whatever justification, is likely to feel aggrieved, particularly an underdeveloped, formerly colonized, often invaded, Communist, Asian country bombed from the air by a powerful, capitalist, white, Western, occasionally imperialist nation. It could just as well have been argued that bombing the North would create a fierce will to fight on and win in a people who had borne the worst of the nationalist struggle against the French and who, almost alone among Asians, had mounted an underground resistance against the Japanese occupation in World War II.

Finally, bombing the North in any systematic, planned way was seen, even in 1965 and by many high in the Johnson Administration, as a largely irrelevant war, what McNamara would later describe to me as a "diversionary effort" that would only nibble at the edge of the fundamental problem of coping with the guerrillas in the South. McGeorge Bundy, returning from Saigon and Pleiku just after the retaliatory raids, reminded reporters that "the primary contest is in South Vietnam."

So no bombing campaign to bring the North to its knees was planned or intentionally started. The bombing began because Lyndon Johnson, in the ebullience of his power and in the fatal grip of an irrelevant experience, wanted to strike and thought he needed to strike and found in the rationale of retaliation the political stance required to fit his lifelong method of operation. The result was the fourth bloodiest war in American history.

LYTTON STRACHEY The Success of Excess

by LOUIS KRONENBERGER

MICHAEL HOLROYD's two-volume *Lyttton Strachey: A Critical Biography* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, \$21.95) runs to almost 1200 large pages and well beyond half a million words. A performance so immoderate, once a prime target of Strachey's own campaigning, Mr. Holroyd is the first to confess to, while offering reasons to justify such length. One reason, that his own biography is altogether unlike any of Strachey's, might seem valid were it not that it is also altogether unlike any "critical biography" I can recall. It's not that Mr. Holroyd has neglected Strachey's work; he has treated it, indeed, in painstakingly ample detail. But, when set against all the minutiae of Strachey's life, all the people he knew, all the details of the way he lived and of the world he lived in, Strachey's work resembles a respectable hill dwarfed by the great bulky mountain range encompassing it. Nor does one bring the book into focus by designating it a *Life and Times*, there being much less sense of Strachey's general era than of his particular environment, of a cultural *Zeitgeist* than of a clique-ridden *Weltanschauung*. What leaves much the strongest impress is Strachey's very private affairs, which involve many other people, some of them still alive. Perhaps the subtitle that would come closest to being accurate is *Life and Letters* — in the special but crucial sense that there could have been no such *Life* as Mr. Holroyd has written without such letters, hitherto unpublished, as Strachey wrote. To make no genteel mystery of it all, it is chiefly Strachey's emotional and homosexual involvements, which I shall presently return to, that seize the limelight; yet it is neither the nature nor the pattern of this that really makes for such disproportion. It is the extraordinary profuseness and increasing unprofitableness of it, the so much greater sense of glare than of light, the sense of Strachey's history endlessly repeating, one might almost say Xeroxing, itself.

Mr. Holroyd has gone at his elephant of a book



Lyttton Strachey by Max Beerbohm

with unwearied thoroughness. That there has been no prior life of Strachey may partly explain the dimensions of this one. Strachey the man has for the general public been very little known; and since his death in 1932, there has been a considerable reaction against Strachey the writer. Hence, with man and writer alike, today's belated, fact-ravenous biographer, embedded in research, can deem it mandatory to start at scratch and tell everything, while a generation after Strachey's death, he may equally decide that enough time has elapsed to Tell All. To implement both objectives, all of Strachey's letters and papers have been put at Mr. Holroyd's disposal "without any form of embargo in using them" by Strachey's "family and friends." Mr. Holroyd has not spared himself in telling everything, or spared others in telling all; moreover, he has shown no partiality between the

two categories. An obscure Strachey cousin has been given equal space with a weird Strachey crotchet; an adolescent report card with a middle-aged billet-doux. Sometimes the same word will speak for both categories: a country inn can mean a wholly calamitous weekend because Strachey forgot to bring along the stopper to his hot-water bottle, or because of a failure of rapport with his traveling companion. Mr. Holroyd's volumes, in other words, are often as trivial and tame as a Victorian spinster's journal, and again as unguarded as a reckless black sheep's diary.

The book's endless alternation of Bovril and Tabasco may well possess, for those with unbudgeted leisure, the kind of value born of being omniscient about a man and his milieu, in the precise form of the size of the shirts he wore and the shape of the earrings. But any value in coming to know everything is in serious conflict here with that perhaps third of the book which is really worth knowing about. Mr. Holroyd's Total Research makes for the utter ruin of what one of Bloomsbury's chieftains once called Significant Form. The problem is intensified because, concerning the Strachey who most deserves a biography — Strachey the writer — there is nothing very new to be said; what is called for is much less revaluation of someone earlier misjudged than rehabilitation of someone unduly neglected. For general background material to Strachey's world there have been, of course, any number of books — in the form of letters, journals, memoirs, biographies, autobiographies, *romans à clef* — written by Strachey's close friends and contemporaries and portraying the Cambridge-cum-Bloomsbury set. By contrast, the thirty-two-year-old Mr. Holroyd never did see Strachey plain, though he has been in touch with many people who did.

What, in any case, Mr. Holroyd has been dealing with is a man in whom there were decided contradictions, yet an even more pronounced consistency; for, though many things madly clashed in Lytton Strachey, virtually nothing altered. Extremes met, and met so often as to come to seem like practiced dancing partners. Known already in childhood for his high spirits, little Lytton was also "cold to the touch." The grown-up mingled a fastidious sensibility and a tittering sensuality; a nature that could be as rationalistic as any observation in Voltaire, and as operatic as any climactic scene in Verdi. In life as in letters Strachey was at once the master and the slave of effect, with an appearance eccentric but most effective. "He drooped," said Frank Swinnerton, "if he stood up and sagged if he sat down"; and the gangling form, the long tubular arms and legs were supported by the large brown beard, the wide-brimmed hats, the horn-rimmed glasses to make him unfor-

gettable, whether in Max Beerbohm's famous caricature, Henry Lamb's famous painting, or virtually any good photograph.

THE eleventh of thirteen children and the son of a notable government administrator in India, Strachey was on both sides part of that upper-middle-class aristocracy of brains and talents containing Darwins and Huxleys, Stephens and Arnolds, Wedgwoods and Trevellyans. A frail, rather sickly child, he was sent to a rather monstrous school run on "natural methods," which included doing without water closets. It was at Cambridge, and most of all, in that very exclusive intellectual club, the Apostles, that Strachey first found himself. Among his contemporaries were Clive Bell, Leonard Woolf, Thoby Stephen, and John Maynard Keynes, while such elders as G. E. Moore, Bertrand Russell, Desmond MacCarthy, and E. M. Forster were frequent Cambridge weekenders. Though Strachey met people while at Cambridge "with a mixture of distrust and hostility," he encountered there the atmosphere best suited to his life and made friends who were lifelong; he and they, indeed, were to replant Cambridge in Bloomsbury; and he and they, supplemented by Thoby Stephen's sisters — the future Vanessa Bell and Virginia Woolf — and such others as Roger Fry and Duncan Grant, became indeed the Bloomsbury Group.

Around them revolved most of Strachey's personal and artistic interests. He was early dominated, says Mr. Holroyd, by two types: those who became a kind of ideal for him and "excited his lust and adoration," and those whom he confided in and who bolstered his self-confidence. About Strachey's infatuations and attachments, even at their most coy and most maudlin, his biographer would seem to be notably explicit, although Lytton's brother and executor, James, a well-known translator of Freud, taxes Mr. Holroyd with being "unnecessarily prudish." It is refreshing, when a man's biography is being written, to find a close relative who puts facts, or Freud, before family; the mere stranger, however, might reject prudish for lavish.

Both Strachey and Bloomsbury represented an elite, a kind of pedigreed bohemia, a nonconformity with exacting house rules, a humanitarianism often conveyed by cold stares, a hospitality by chilly fingertips. Cultivated and enlightened, pro-French and wonderfully English, Bloomsbury created its own version of the salon. In its taste it was unfettered rather than avant-garde (Virginia

A teacher at Brandeis University, Mr. Kronenberger was Regents Professor at Berkeley during the winter.

Woolf called *Ulysses* "tosh," and Strachey saw nothing in Matisse and early Picasso). In its temperament, it was faintly *ancien régime*, quite supercilious, quite mandarin. Everything about it was so unmistakably *crème de la crème* that it was naïve in one to expect the mere milk of human kindness. (When Henry Lamb hurt his painting hand, Roger Fry commiserated — it would not seem jokingly — by hoping it wouldn't affect his piano playing.) Bloomsbury, it appears, had much less run away from home than done over the house, with a good deal more stress on light than air. Being overcivilized, it was, except here and there, militantly neurotic. It could also smack of the purest middle-class gentility: while Strachey's cultivated mother and Virginia Woolf were having tea, a dog made, between the two women, a "large conspicuous mess on the carpet," which both of them carefully and completely ignored. It could smack again of bluestocking froufrou, with James Strachey's wife "reading Rabelais with the aid of six dictionaries."

There was a kind of Greater Bloomsbury, with Lady Ottoline Morell and others providing a peerage, Mark Gertler and others a peasantry. Behind its protective walls were glass houses where Bloomsbury vibrated with liaisons, realignments, *ménages à trois*. It also bought country cottages, endorsed rural weekends, went on walking tours, visited back and forth. It had much playfulness, not altogether free from nail-scratching, and much sensibility that tended to choke on its own bones. There were parlor games till all hours and fresh gossip by every mail. Strachey's letters keep pace with his love affairs, and his confessors emerge at times as his rivals. Amid all this, he one day, despite a heavy cold, dashed across London to propose marriage to the future Virginia Woolf. "I proposed," he wrote to his brother, "and was accepted. It was an awkward moment . . . especially as I realized, the very moment it was happening, that the whole thing was repulsive to me." Fortunately Virginia, though perhaps offended, in no way pined, and promptly released him.

Many Stracheyan and Bloomsbury triangles had not just a Freudian but a Euclidean air, with two people amorous of the same person becoming amorous of each other. Such ricocheting relationships, such ticklish contretemps so abound that Mr. Holroyd, though badly miscalculating their value, can hardly be accused of merely making capital of them. How, indeed, protest the letters in view of Strachey's public announcements on the envelopes:

Deliver this to SENHOUSE (Roger)
I prithee, postman debonair.
He is the handsome upstairs lodger
At number 14 Brunswick Square.

There was, along with this, a love of indecency in Strachey, sometimes adolescent and callow, sometimes donnish and overripe. This is a taste that others in Bloomsbury seemed to share: at a fancy-dress party, one man appeared as a eunuch and another as a "whore great with child." A good many of Bloomsbury's members, it would seem, led rather escapist lives on rococo lines. Conversationally they could be very emancipated at their famous late-at-night cocoa parties; but as E. M. Forster remarked, they "would have shrunk from the . . . freedom which results from a little beer." The whole thing makes for a somewhat precious, rather than a hearty, coarse *chronique scandaleuse*; in the end, indeed, Bloomsbury behavior suggests less this or that form of sexuality than a kind of environmental incest.

THE sense of excess in *Lytton Strachey* is not confined to sex; it is ubiquitous. After a dozen of Strachey's weekend jaunts, we can only yawn; with his interminable ailments, we have trouble not laughing. Clearly, he was never an altogether well man; clearly too his ill health was often self-created, was a form of "hysteria." He took to his bed — often in other people's houses — with "indigestion," "fever," "palpitations and piles," "a chill on the entrails," "vertigo," "influenza," "colic," "biliousness," "back trouble," "shingles," "collywobbles," "swollen glands" — on and on, with such sickroom specialties of his own as "a bandage round his head," "not properly ill," and "*angoisses*." At the theater, he had to sit on the aisle "in case he should faint" during the performance.

He dramatized his plights as he did his plots, as he did so many things. Few skeptics have shown such a turn for histrionics, few outright romantics worn their hearts on so many sleeves or cried on so many shoulders. So much Richardsonian weepsiness, so much self-induced *Sturm und Drang* argue against real passionateness or intensity. The hints of suicide ("The thought of suicide," wrote Nietzsche, "is a great consolation: with the help of it one has got through many a bad night"), the melodramatic heartaches and despairs, the dashes across London to propose marriage smack rather too much of the boy who cried Woolf. In other ways — as a pacifist, for example, during World War I — Strachey showed courage and character, and the real if waspish loyalty which was a kind of Bloomsbury badge. He could also be incredibly wrong, and vulgarly snobbish to boot. E. M. Forster, he wrote, is "a mediocre man . . . he will come to no good, and in the meantime he's treated rudely by waiters and is not really admired even by middle-class dowagers." Often disliked,

Strachey was equally an object of devotion. He could be, it seems, dreadful and delightful by turns, and friendship with him apparently depended less on his becoming an acquired taste for others than on their passing muster with him. His Bloomsbury friends remain something of a blur and individually lack faces; but it is with Bloomsbury as a whole that Mr. Holroyd is perhaps most successful. He provides, in effect, the history of an attitude, itself a short chapter in the cultural history of England. That attitude by now is peeling and discolored; yet it had its own notable distinction, and the best of its work, in Forster, Virginia Woolf, Maynard Keynes, Roger Fry, and in Lytton Strachey, should prosper for a considerable time to come.

As for Strachey, he was not just a brilliant biographer, he was a revolutionizing one. An *Eminent Victorians* had, indeed, a greater immediate impact than a *Ulysses* or a *Waste Land*, for at a stroke it antiquated a method and enthroned a manner. When *Eminent Victorians* appeared, biography, while displaying hopeless anarchy of form, was all too lacking in freedom of speech. Strachey gave it the polish of style, the sting of plain speaking, the tensions of fiction, and brought, along with his new kind of technique, a new kind of target. He recast four popularly revered Victorian figures; and if, with Cardinal Manning, Florence Nightingale, Dr. Arnold, and General Gordon themselves, there were signs of contrivance, there was truth enough generally to set biography free. There was talent enough to raise biography high. There were tremors enough to break bones and smash statues. Overnight, as it were, biography turned from burying facts to burying reputations.

At times, in proclaiming the truth, Strachey could tamper as shamelessly as others had done to suppress it. In the interests, again, of art, he was not above taking liberties with nature, as in his deliberately shortening Dr. Arnold's legs a trifle. And indeed, given an inch, Strachey might stretch it out into two feet of clay. The Dr. Arnold is an unjust caricature; Florence Nightingale's personal faults are made to overshadow her achievement. Manning is pointedly contrasted with Newman, but even if Manning was truly a sinner, Newman was far from a saint. I agree with Mr. Holroyd that the study of General Gordon is much the best of the four. It has the most body, the truest "story," the deftest storytelling; and its tragic bravura is a fact of history. A desire to indict the vices and faults of an era overhangs the whole book but essentially fails. The indictment, in any case, is perhaps less Victorian than merely English: much that is muddled, scheming, snobbish, ambition-ridden still twitches and throbs at the level

of society Strachey dug into. And Strachey himself was overeager to show that a great deal of history's size and brawn was only excess fat. He pounced on every gaffe or banality or oddity; he dwelt on people's soup stains and squints and warts, so that in the end he as much showed up his method as his man. Himself no mere debunker, he yet made debunking inevitable. *Eminent Victorians* is the most trenchant of Strachey's books and proved the most influential, but I disagree with Mr. Holroyd and others that it is the best of them.

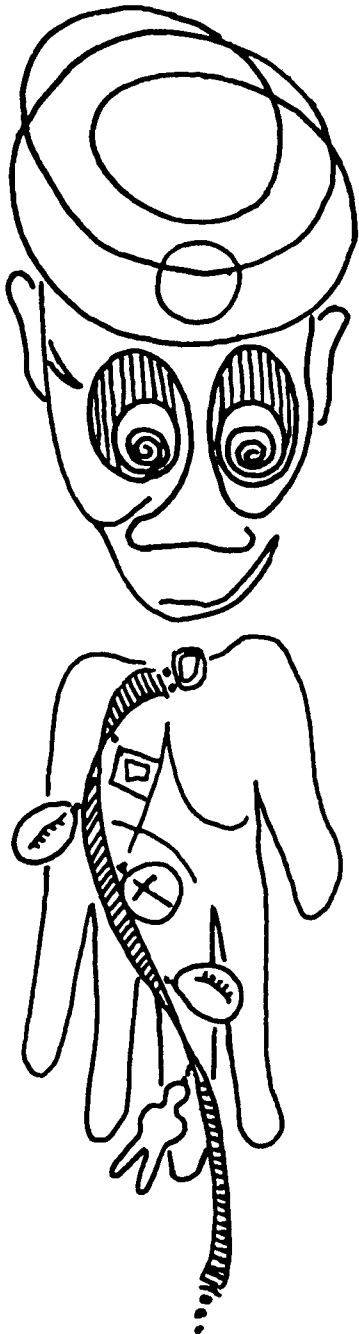
I prefer, though Mr. Holroyd fairly enough speaks of its "softness," *Queen Victoria*; for along with the softness goes less pretension to scope. In Strachey in *Eminent Victorians* sought on too meager grounds to indict large forces, in *Queen Victoria* the heroine herself is grand scale, but her actual importance quite minor. The empire she really ruled over was her vast, far-flung family; the terror she often inspired evokes the hearthrug or the dinner table; the most ironic contrast she presents is between a tremendous manner and a tiny mind. The tone of the book is not coldly acidulous but comic; Strachey withheld the knife and flourished the dress sword. *Queen Victoria* gains in texture and tone what it loses of stature and toughness, and is on such modest terms well-nigh perfect.

With *Elizabeth and Essex* Strachey failed. He stretched rhetoric into verbal melodrama, offered grandiose tapestry passions that do not stir us, and complexities in the Queen that end up as simplification: as I have said elsewhere, she twists and turns, and turns and twists, until she resembles Indecision in a morality play. Far more rewarding are some of the relatively early pieces about eighteenth-century figures, the "Madame du Deffand" and the "Voltaire and Frederick the Great." Here a "classical," witty, urbanely malicious era matched Strachey's own temperament and called forth his best talents. His essays vary, but, to go no further, two of them possessed great pioneering value, paid able tribute to Racine and Stendhal when they had small place among the English-speaking.

Mr. Holroyd has usefully elucidated various controversies concerning Strachey's accuracy and open-mindedness, and has made some sound critical comments on Strachey's work. Unhappily, turned loose among so much old and slight, so much new and startling material, he has allowed it to swamp him. His use of it is deficient in perspective, architecture, economy of style. Of such weaknesses Strachey was himself never guilty; his writing had shapeliness and grace, so that, though quite lacking greatness, not always loyal to truth or at home with the deeper forces of history, he can still offer us pleasure of the most civilized sort — a gift that only a fool or a prig would decline.

YAW MANU'S CHARM

An Atlantic "First"
by Ayi Kwei Armah



Now that he is in prison, some people are afraid even to say that they knew Yaw Manu. He has become a leper. That's because he was caught, not because these people shun evil. After all, everybody knows that it is impossible for an honest man to become rich, and yet the rich are respected. I often think that this our world is full of traitors, Judases who are your friends as long as things are going well for you, but turn your back or have something go wrong, and they will be there betraying you, insulting you, and saying that they don't know you, they have only heard your name somewhere. The evil that men do lives after them, so to speak.

I am not ashamed to say that Yaw Manu was my friend. We went to elementary school together from class one to standard seven, ten years in the same village Catholic school. He was very serious, always thinking of winning a big scholarship and going to England for further studies, even though he wasn't our first boy. In fact he wasn't even one of our clever boys. We were forty-five in our class, and he was about twentieth in the big tests. Yet he was never discouraged. England was always in his head. It was in him like a disease, eating him and making him live only in the future, far away from us all and everything around him. First he wanted to go to Achimota or Mfantipim or one of the really famous secondary schools, where they only take one hundred students a year, all first and second boys from the town schools. Yaw Manu tried when we were in standard five and failed the Common Entrance. In standard six he tried again and failed again. Our standard seven teacher told him to choose a smaller school for which it would not be necessary to sit the Common Entrance. He said the same thing to all of us who wanted to continue our education, even the first boy. Manu didn't like the idea of going to an unknown college, but in the end the teacher brought him to his stomach senses.

We studied hard for the big examination at the end of the year, and also prayed hard. The girls made Saint Philomena's cords with white, blue, and red threads for us to wear around our waists for luck, and we even got the Dutch priest to bless all our cords for us when he came to visit our village. We were very lucky, because he came only once

a year, and some years not at all. We also remembered to get Hausa charms from a maalam who lived near our village, because we knew that even though white magic was very strong, black magic was even stronger if it wasn't badly used. We all agreed that if we could combine the two, nothing could stand against us, although at first some of the clever boys were worried and said that magic worked sometimes by addition and at other times by subtraction, and that if we added black magic to white magic we might get subtraction instead of addition; in which case everything would be lost. This disturbed us a bit, until our prayer leader, a very old boy with a big body and an even bigger voice, proved that this was all nonsense by asking, "What about multiplication and division?" We all laughed at that.

Then the smallest boy in the class, who was really a dwarf and a very good joker, asked, "And long division?" We laughed louder at this; in fact I wept with laughing so much that day. So we went on making plans, and forgot about subtraction. Some of us wanted the maalam's charms to be given to the priest for blessing, but our first boy warned us that it was a bad idea, because priests and witch doctors never ate from the same bowl, so to speak. We said that this was a pity, but we also decided that since discretion was the better part of valor, so to speak, we would not give our maalam's charms to the priest to bless after all.

When the priest came and blessed our cords, he said that it was very important to have the protection of Saint Philomena and Saint Anthony of Padua, the friend of animals, and Jesus Christ and Mary full of grace, and many other big saints, but we must never forget that God and the saints would help us only if we worked hard and helped ourselves in the first place. This speech of his caused a lot of trouble among us because we all knew the catechism by heart, and with our little knowledge, although we did not want to boast or disagree with the white priest, still we knew that something was wrong with what he had said. Of course we did not argue with him while he was talking to us, but as soon as he was gone a serious argument broke out. You see, the catechism said that although as human beings born of women we could never save ourselves, yet if we only had faith we could level mountains. That is exactly what the catechism said; but here was this priest telling us that faith was not enough. Our clever boys could not agree on the correct approach. Some said that it was well known that the big examination was inhumanly difficult, so only faith could bring success. The other group said that God would never come down to take anybody's examinations for him since he was very busy keeping his only eye on Mary sitting on his left-hand side and on Jesus

sitting on his right-hand side. This was a disrespectful thing to say, but then these were rough boys who never went to church, and the teachers were afraid to cane them on Monday mornings when the church-attendance register was read.

About three months before the examination, a strange man had come from the nearest town saying that he had a cousin who worked at the Examinations Council in Accra and that through this cousin of his he had obtained some tips which he was willing to sell us. We had arranged a very secret meeting with him in the bush, and there we had each given the man sixpence in return for twenty questions with long, learned answers, full of impressive big words, written, he said, by some secondary school teacher in Accra who had lately gone mad with too much intelligence. Brain fag, he called this disease, which is brought on by too much cleverness.

WELL, now we had these precious rumors and the answers. The only thing remaining was to chew, pour, pass, and forget. I mean all we had to do was to chew every word thoroughly, so that on the day of the big examination we could pour all this amount of stuff onto the paper, pass the examination, and forget everything after that. Simple. Were we now to stop chewing the tips just because we knew God was on our side? Some decided to put their entire faith in God, Saint Philomena, Saint Anthony of Padua, who loved animals, and the Muslim maalam. Yaw Manu was one of these believers.

From night till morning they prayed, and in the daytime they fasted. They suffered terribly, but they liked it, because they despised those of us who ate regularly, and the more their bellies ached with hunger, the more they became convinced that God was helping them. They burned long Indian candles wrapped in black ribbons, and the urine smell of incense was always on them. On our classroom floor they drew a large Star of David, with little crosses in all the corners, and "SAX ET SARAT, BE YE OUR GUIDES" written boldly at the bottom. In the middle of the star they set a glass of clear water, and when everything was ready, they would step outside and catch some little boy and bring him in, trembling all over. First they would ask him if he was seven years old. I think the catechism says that children of less than

Mr. Armah is a young Ghanaian writer who was educated in his native country and at Groton and Harvard. His first novel, THE BEAUTYFUL ONES ARE NOT YET BORN, will be published in May by Houghton Mifflin.

seven are less corrupt than those over seven. If the child was over seven, he was beaten a little and sent away. But if he said he was six or something like that, then the thing to do was to ask him if he had ever slept with a woman. You know, not like sleeping with his mother, but the real thing. The question was important because the star and the crosses and the water were for calling Saint Anthony to speak to us, and only a virgin boy was useful for that purpose. A child who had already seen the secrets of womanhood would be beaten quite severely and sent away, but a pure boy would be told to stoop there in the middle of the floor and look into Saint Anthony's glass of water.

"What do you see?" our prayer leader would ask, his voice stern.

"Nothing," the boy would say, looking harder.

The prayer leader would clear his throat and say, "Close your eyes"; a long pause, then, "Open your eyes. Now what do you see?"

"Nothing yet," would come the uncomfortable reply.

"Look harder. Can't you see a man in black holding a cross?"

After a moment the little boy would say, "Ooooooh, I can see him now. Yes, he is wearing a black . . ." A quick kick in the buttocks, and the boy would be thrown out, because we knew that Saint Anthony was white magic, and therefore only wore white. If the little boy saw the real Saint Anthony, then he was told to turn his eyes away from the glass, put his ear to it, and listen to his message.

"Is Saint Anthony speaking now?" the leader would ask in the still silence.

"Yes, Saint Anthony is speaking now."

"What language is he speaking?" The correct answer was not Fanti, since the saint only spoke English. At first I found it difficult to understand how a boy could understand what was said if Saint Anthony only spoke English, but the prayer leader explained to me that the saint had the power to make anybody understand him if he chose to, and that this was a mystery and a miracle like the Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary of which the catechist spoke during the benedictions in October, and also like the miracle of Christ turning water to champagne at the wedding.

"Will all of us pass?" the leader would ask.

"Saint Anthony says no," the little boy would reply after a while.

"How many failures?"

"Saint Anthony says three."

For some reason the number was always three. The three boys who were usually at the bottom of the class would pray very hard, and fast harder. Yaw Manu, even though he was not one of these

three, also prayed and fasted with them. He was a very careful boy.

On the day of the big examination, we all went to early morning Mass. The catechist gave his speech about crossing the rivers and bridges of life, and all the way from the church to the examination hall we formed a slow procession, singing "Lead, kindly Light." Examination day was always a holiday, and the other schoolchildren and the women of the village stood by the wayside and said admiring words and "May the Good Friend go with you" to us. Some wept, and we all cast our eyes downward, for we knew that indeed we were descending into the valley of death.

WHEN the results came in December, we were told that nineteen of us had failed. Actually this was very good for our school because every year more than half of our standard seven boys failed. Even though our teacher tried to look sad and disappointed as he read out the results to us, it was plain that his mournful look was for the benefit of those who had failed, and that in his belly he was quite happy. Later we met by ourselves and tried to explain why more than three had failed. Our prayer leader, who was himself among the failures, became very angry and said that it was all because some of us had not fasted and prayed well enough, and that the extra failures were only bearing upon themselves the sins of the careless ones. In fact he became so angry that I was happy when the meeting broke up after the singing of "Lead, kindly Light."

Both of us passed, I mean Yaw Manu and myself, and the next year we went to the town to attend the small secondary school.

I do not like to talk about those five years I spent in the secondary school. Nobody had any friends there, and the work was very hard. The priests who taught us made us go to chapel every morning, and there were evening prayers every day. I was very unhappy, but Yaw Manu was happy. All the priests liked him because even though he was a poor student, he was the best Catholic in the school. He seemed to live in the chapel. In the very first year he became an altar boy. How he learned all those Latin sentences was a mystery to me because he found it difficult to chew his history notes. Whenever I saw him he had one of those little missals in his hand, and was repeating the Latin words that altar servers use. He would screw up his face, and the funny words would roll out: "*Ad deum qui laetificat juventutem meam. . . . Quia tu es Deus, fortitudo mea, Quare me repulisti. . . .*"

The Church became something between us, and Yaw Manu did not really like me anymore, but to

me he was always a friend and a brother. I am also a civilized man and a Christian, but I think Sunday is enough for people to be holy; otherwise the Good Lord would not have bothered to set apart the other six days for ordinary work. I think it was the Church that caused Yaw Manu to fail the Cambridge School Certificate Examination, which we took in form five. It is well known that these examinations, being set in England, are extremely difficult, and it is no disgrace to fail them. I myself was lucky to get a grade three. But I still think Yaw Manu could have passed the School Cert. if he had not spent so much of his time at the altar. Of course the priests liked him so much that they let him stay another year to try again, which is something I am sure they would not have done for a boy like me; but it is also well known that once you fail the School Certificate, it will take a miracle to pass it after that.

I did not return to my village after I got my certificate, but came to Sekondi to seek employment, and that is how I got my job in the British Bank of West Africa. I wrote to Yaw Manu, and he sometimes replied, though not very warmly.

That year Yaw Manu failed again. He went to his priest friends and told them that if they would favor him with one more year, this time he would definitely pass. The priests told him that he was the best boy they had known, and they knew that God would always be with him if he continued to be good. Then they said they were really sorry, but they could not let him stay another year. They told him that the Lord Jesus Christ had never been to a secondary school, and had certainly never been given the chance to take the Cambridge School Certificate Examination; that Peter, the first Pope, was a simple fisherman, and also that Saint Joseph, the father of God the Son, was only a poor carpenter. Now I say that Yaw Manu was a good Christian, a very good one indeed, and so he knew all this. Still, he had the desire to make himself a big man in the world, especially to go to England to pursue his education. He was very disappointed that he couldn't stay another year, but there was nothing he could do about it, so he came to Sekondi to look for employment. The manager of the bank hired him without too much trouble.

I AM the last person to expect anybody who works in a bank to be happy, but I must say that even I found Yaw Manu's behavior surprising. Not that he did not work well; in fact, the opposite was true. His books were always the neatest, and he was never late, not even once, and unlike the rest of us, he took sick leave only when he was

actually sick. But he never joked or laughed when everybody else did, and believe me, we bank clerks have some very funny things to say about the way people live. There were all these funny people, dirty, ugly people who look far from rich, and they had these fat balances in the bank, and the only thing we could do when we thought of such people having all that money when we needed it so desperately was to laugh. But Yaw Manu never laughed with us, not even at the woman who was so afraid of losing her money that she came to us every week and asked to count it. And there were some very laughable things happening even among ourselves. For instance, when the manager first told us we would have to wear ties when at work, we grumbled, saying that this was the Gold Coast, hot Africa near the equator, not cold England in the Arctic Sea. We actually said that, and this manager of ours didn't get angry; he just laughed and said England was not Eskimo country, and we also laughed very loudly, I don't know why. But not Yaw Manu. He kept on adding up his neat rows of figures. And then when we saw that because of the ties we had on all these rich people were beginning to call us "Sah," we joked about it a lot and laughed, but Yaw Manu kept silent.

I remember at another time something very funny happened. You see, we all brought our food to work because the bank was in European Town and so we couldn't go home at twelve to eat. We knew it was shameful to carry food plainly through the streets like illiterates, so we all had big tobacco tins in which we put our food. With a matchbox on top of a tobacco can and a pipe between our teeth, each of us looked very respectable, like a graduate. Now one day one of us, James Sackey, who bluffs so much that we call him "Yankee-Yankee," was coming to work when, just outside the bank, a small boy hit him with a bicycle. It was nothing serious, but you know Sekondi people: even before Sackey was down, a small crowd was rushing to see the accident. Then the man fell. He tried to hold on to his tobacco tin, but it also fell down, and what do you think fell from it? Groundnut stew. Oh, the crowd laughed and laughed. We also laughed when he came in. But not Yaw Manu.

I don't think it was the work or the bank itself that made him unhappy. In fact he didn't seem to care for the bank at all. The truth is that he was working too hard, studying at home and hoping to take the London matriculation. I found this out when I visited him in his room. He was always studying when I went to see him. On the wall above his desk he had a sign that said something about great men. I can only remember the last two lines:

But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upwards in the night.

And indeed, that was what Yaw Manu was trying to do. He told me proudly that he was paying for two correspondence courses from England, one called Rapid Results College and the other Bennett College. He explained to me that though most people took one at a time, he was taking both so that things would go faster. He was also subscribing to a magazine from England called *Psychology*, which would give him confidence plus the secrets of success and health. He even gave me a copy of *Psychology* to read. I was impressed with it. It had many big words, and I had difficulty understanding it. Yaw Manu said this was only because I had not been reading it regularly.

"Look," he told me, pointing to a large can in his meat safe. "Bemax. That's what I drink to clear my brain. It's very powerful, so it's very expensive. It's for brainworkers. I get very tired working all night, but I drink that, and I am all right for work in the day. Of course I take brain pills like Pro-Plus and things even more powerful. I order them from England, and they are very expensive."

I wondered whether this would not affect his health.

"Oh, no," he said. "I have ordered this." He showed me a catalogue with all sorts of pictures and pointed to one showing ropes and bars and many queer things. "From America. Charles Atlas, you know. A sound mind in a sound body, so to speak."

Yaw Manu stopped going to church when he came to work in Sekondi, and did not talk so often about the goodness of God. I thought that would make him easier to live with, but I was wrong. He still talked distantly, like a priest or a catechist, but only about things no one could understand, and I felt uncomfortable listening to his new ideas. He said he had new beliefs, but when I asked him about them, he would use big words like "positive" and "rationality" and "strategic effort." His room was full of books and papers and those pills that he said were so good for his brain. The bottles came with testimonials from doctors in England to prove their power: pictures of silent men in long white coats holding test tubes and other instruments to the light.

In spite of all this, Yaw Manu failed his examinations again and again. He said nothing about them, but it was easy enough to guess what was happening. Every six months he would ask for a day's casual leave, and that was how we knew about the examinations. After that he would come back to work, and for about a month he would be quiet and superior, like a man with a

great secret; but nothing ever came of it in the end. If he had passed the examinations, he would immediately have asked for promotion, or at least an increase in his salary, but he remained in the same position all the time he was with us, and his salary increases were the usual ten shillings we all got at the end of every year. That is why he had to borrow so heavily to pay for all those pills and books and exercises. Some people, talking like wise men from the East, have asked why Manu did not borrow from the bank itself instead of going to the moneylender with his heavy rates of interest. These are childish questions, clever on the surface but having no experience behind them. We who work in the bank are supposed to arrange our affairs as neatly as we do the affairs of the bank. What would the manager think of us if he knew that we could not live within our means? Maybe Yaw Manu was a fool to take those courses and buy those books that cost so much, and to buy the pills too, but since he was only trying to advance himself, he was not wrong to go to the moneylender. Many young men borrow money in that way to advance themselves, and when they are promoted, it is not too hard for them to pay back what they owe.

It is a great pity that Yaw Manu's pills did not clear his brain and help him to pass his examinations. He continued to study hard right up to the end. Perhaps if he had relaxed a little now and then, he would not have grown so thin and weak. After all, all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, so to speak. It's bad enough to have to study so hard, but no girls, no drinking, no dancing: that's an impossible life for any young man to lead.

I WILL never agree that Yaw Manu was mad. Those who say he was mad have little experience. Some people have even said it was brain fag, the disease caused by too much cleverness; as if Yaw Manu were clever enough for that.

They are sending him to the asylum in Accra, like a real madman. Perhaps if I did not know him better, I also would think him mad. I must say that if you look at his behavior from the outside, it is hard to see the truth about him. That was the mistake of the reporter from the *Daily Graphic*. He told the truth about Yaw Manu's outside behavior, but that was not enough to give the real truth. I have carried that article with me since the day after the trial, and even though there is nothing false said in it, I am dissatisfied whenever I read it:

SEKONDI, 14 June. At the Magistrate's Court today a 26-year-old Bank clerk was sentenced to three years —

in the Mental Asylum. Throughout the proceedings, the accused, one Yaw Manu, did not once open his mouth. Counsel appointed by the Crown on his behalf pleaded guilty while asking for leniency on the grounds that the mental balance of the accused was plainly disturbed.

According to Prosecuting Witness Mr. J. D. McCarthy, District Manager of the British Bank of West Africa, Market Street Branch, Sekondi, the said Yaw Manu had been an employee of the Bank for a period of just over 18 months. During that time he had behaved himself excellently, and had been well known as a punctual, serious, neat, and careful clerk. Until the 6th of May last, the accused was said to have done nothing to arouse anyone's suspicions.

At 2:27 p.m. on May 6th, Mr. McCarthy said, while he was balancing the Bank's books after hours, he saw Mr. Manu, the accused, take twelve bundles of currency, totaling £1150. The accused, continued the Witness for the Prosecution, then made his way out of the Bank premises; he did not seem to have heard the shouts of the witness, and when the latter attempted to block his exit, he extricated himself "slowly and silently, but very firmly, with extraordinary strength. He did everything as if he were in a trance," added Mr. McCarthy.

The accused is said to have gone home after the theft. Because of the accused's strange behavior, Mr. McCarthy said, he had hesitated to notify the Police, but "waited to see what would happen the next day. Primitive Psychology is a hobby of mine, and the chap's behavior struck me as deuced interesting."

The Magistrate at this point reprimanded the Witness for not having notified the Police immediately, a correction which seems to have been accepted in good spirit. The case continued.

The day after the theft, according to the Witness for the Prosecution, the accused came back to work, "and acted as if nothing had happened." It was only then that the Police were called in. The accused had tried to slip past the Police "again as if he were in a trance," and had had to be subdued by force. His home was later searched, and the missing £1150 found intact.

Official sources indicate that the accused will be treated as a special case and be sent to the Mental Asylum in Accra.

Now, there is nothing wrong with that report, but I say it is not enough. The article does not even mention the fact that Yaw Manu took the money at accounting time. Every two weeks we have to bring all the books in order. We sit for hours adding up rows and rows of figures, first the black and then the red. To those who have it, it is all money to be used, but to us it is figures upon figures, like soldier ants swarming through our heads and giving us not a moment of peace. I have often spent my nights just dreaming of these figures. One moment they are ants crawling through me and eating my poor brains to little bits and mashing it all to build their hill with.

I must say that I have often thought of things

I could do if I had half the money some people have. All of us talk of this sometimes, and I know that each of those working in the bank would have gone to England to study if only he had enough money. We were all honest men, with no great debts, and yet we were sometimes heavily tempted. And as for Yaw Manu, though he was honest enough, in fact more honest than even I, he had his pills and books and courses to pay for, and he wanted to go to England more desperately than any other young man did, and besides that, the money-lender was crying for his very blood.

I was not there myself the day he stole the money. Only our manager was present. Usually, we were all in a hurry to get home after two o'clock, but Yaw Manu often stayed behind, so I for one found nothing strange in his behavior at that time. I remember, however, that when I left, Yaw Manu was in the lavatory, and that he had been there for rather a long time.

The day after the crime, Yaw Manu did something unusual. He came in late. Not only that — he was whistling as he came in. As soon as he sat down he was called into Mr. McCarthy's office, and we whispered among ourselves that perhaps at last he was going to be promoted.

When we heard Yaw Manu's voice loudly shouting insults at the manager, we knew something was very wrong. Soon Yaw Manu marched out of the office, looking very angry and saying repeatedly, "I'll teach you not to call me a thief!"

Mr. McCarthy came out after him, his face all red. He asked someone to call the police, and told us not to let Yaw Manu leave the bank or go to his counter. It was then that Yaw Manu remembered that I was his friend. He looked at me, and told me something in Fanti. He said I should look into the left corner of his drawer, and I would find something there. This thing I was to take into the lavatory. I did everything as he instructed me to do it, like his good friend. What I found in the drawer was a bangle, made of leather, with cowries and little talismans attached to it. I took it to the lavatory, and a moment later Yaw Manu went in there.

When he came out of the lavatory he looked completely different. He was so silent and serene, like a priest when he is walking toward the altar. He did not seem to see anybody or to hear anything as he walked past us to the door. The police had come by now and wanted to ask Manu some questions; but he did not seem to notice anything. He just tried silently to go past them into the street, and when they tried to stop him gently, he pushed them away in a strange, quiet way, like slow-motion

films. That is what Mr. McCarthy meant when he said those things about Yaw Manu being in a trance. Manu struggled with the police until they broke his arm and held him down, and all through this he said nothing at all.

I visited him as early as possible in the police station. He had been beaten rather hard, and could not talk very long, but he gave me the bangle and told me to take it to a certain maalam, whose address he gave me.

"Tell him I did everything he told me to do, but it did not work," Yaw Manu said, looking away from me. I told him I would do whatever he asked me to do, since a friend in need is a friend indeed, so to speak.

"And don't forget to ask him to give you back my twenty-five pounds," he added.

When I entered the maalam's dark, musty room, he greeted me like a long-expected brother even before I could see him properly. He took both of my hands in his, stared long at my palms, and said heavily, "Ah, my friend, plenty devil follow you; plenty plenty devil."

I told the maalam I had not come to find out anything for myself, but to return Yaw Manu's charm and get back the money he had paid for it. I gave the man the bangle, and he squinted at it. I could see better now, and I looked at the maalam as he studied his bangle through half-shut eyes. His eyes were enormous; his eyelids slipped wetly over and away from the huge balls while he spoke through lips so dry and old he had to wet them constantly.

"You savvy what dey inside dam juju?" he asked, fixing his eyes on me. I shook my head.

"Bring shilling; I go tell you." Curiosity won, and I gave him a shilling. When he had the shilling safely in his hand, he said, "Bring twenty-five pounds. I go give you." I kept myself from laughing and told him I could only decide to buy it when I knew what kind of charm it was. He looked at me suspiciously for a moment, closed his eyes, and in a funny, singsong tone, began: "Dis ting, like you wear am for you arm like so, and you say some word way I fit teach you, man no fit see you. You fit do anytin, no man fit see you. You fit steal, you fit kill self, no man fit see you. You and air be one, like so. You like dam juju?"

It made me angry to see this man try to fool me too, so that when I spoke, my voice was so loud he opened his eyes in surprise. "Look, maalam, my friend told me to let you know that he had tried all your tricks, and they hadn't worked." By the time I had finished speaking, the man had become calm again, and his eyes were closed.

"He go wrong someplace. He do sometin wrong,

my friend. Dis juju no miss. He do sometin wrong, my friend." He repeatedly told me of the virtues of the charm, urging me to buy it and make myself invisible with it.

"My friend," he kept saying through those wetted lips, "you no want money? You fit be rich. Like you wear dam juju, no man fit see you. You fit do anytin. Com', com', my friend. I reduce for you. Twenty pounds."

I shook my head. I had already decided to go to the police.

"Look, my friend," he persisted, "eighteen pounds."

I was at the door, and he was at my elbow. "Fifteen pounds, my friend." I was out in the street.

At ten pounds, my friend, I was already halfway to the police station. This is the first time I am going to be mentioned in the *Daily Graphic*. People will read the words of someone called the witness for the prosecution, but how many of my old classmates will know that I am the one? I wonder.

THE PREPARED PIANO

(For John Cage)

BY BABETTE DEUTSCH

It knocks. Does it knock? What knocks?
Neither grief nor joy.

A whisper
plunders what never was heard
by a piano before.
Perhaps a mechanical bird,
not Byzantine, not of gold,

yet a wonder, sings
in a cold hall
of a thing

never seen by the eyes
of a piano before.

Has the instrument gone daft?

Can it know what is meant?

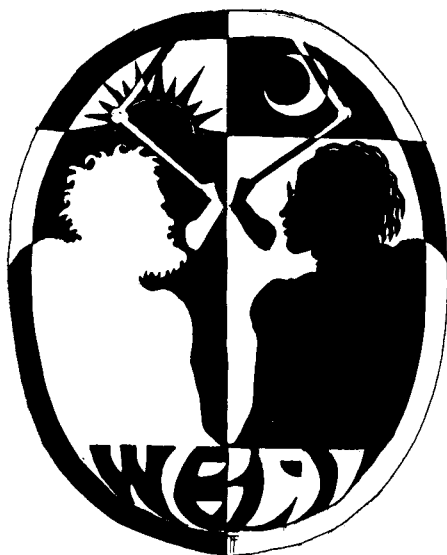
Or is it intent only
on what is learned by laughter?

earned by
surprise? Surprise!
Surprise!

accent

Radio Free New York

by Alfred Mayor



WBAI, the only New York FM station supported entirely by its listeners, operates from a squat, pinkish nonbrownstone on East Thirty-ninth Street. Outside there is a bronze plaque saying Vera Institute of Justice, but nothing about a radio station. Inside, in the narrow vestibule, sits a bored policeman day and night. WBAI's transmitter was expertly sabotaged one Sunday last September, and a few days later a mysterious fire very nearly burned the brownstone down. One of the station's own engineers was arrested on suspicion of setting the fire. WBAI attracts special people.

Theoretically, the station begins to serve its listeners at 7 A.M. each weekday. But generally East Thirty-ninth Street is dead at that hour. The policeman is asleep in the vestibule; fluorescent lights burn in the station's second- and third-floor offices, but the transmitter is shut off and loyal listeners are tuned to whatever electronic music the 99.5 megacycle band chooses to offer them.

About 7:20 on good mornings, a taxi disgorges a bearded, bearlike man, who shambles slowly toward the nonbrownstone. He looks very unhappy. You can see patches of scalp where his black hair has been crushed into disks against the pillow. He is tieless, and he fumbles deliberately through a hedgehog of keys that is another manifestation of tightened security at the station. The policeman wakes up, grunts, and dozes again. Larry Josephson, the bear, climbs to the third floor and enters what was once a maid's room when the house was inhabited by real people. The room measures about seven by eleven feet, and the floor is gritty with mashed cigarette butts, superfluous correspondence, crushed coffee cartons, worms of white recording tape leaders, and honest gray dirt. One corner of the room is fitted with three worn turntables, a huge electric clock, and a cantilevered microphone that hangs over a console of switches and buttons and dials. A green swivel chair sits in front of the console. It squeaks — as 50,000 listeners can tell you. Another wall is a confection of tape recorders, more buttons, and more dials. There are two chairs for guests and a disused typewriter table, also frequently used as a chair.

Larry fiddles with the electronic wall and turns the station on. Then

he plucks LPs from the record library — a claustrophobic corridor that leads away from the "studio." A light blinks under the console. Larry picks up the phone and articulates his first words of the day: "Yes, it will be in a few minutes." At 7:35 he tells the microphone that the policeman was asleep downstairs. "Wonderful to see someone get some rest for a change." Larry puts on the *William Tell* Overture, his current favorite in an ambitious series of the great musical cliché and — those with long memories will note — the theme song to *The Lone Ranger*. Larry recites "the official FCC litany so we're legal" — the station's name, address, wattage, facilities. This suggests another dialogue with the microphone: "We are the Communications Commission. Can a Communications Commission over thirty-five find happiness with a transmitter fifty times its power? He says that Bonnie and Clyde are in charge of security at the station transmitter in the Empire State Building, and that Bosley Crowther is WBAI's man in charge of good taste.

After a while Larry the bagelman arrives with a large box full of breakfast — coffee, orange juice, triple order of bacon, two fried eggs and bagels, split and buttered. Larry the B. lingers until Larry the J. picks him up on the air, as he does every morning; Tonto and the Lone Ranger. Larry the B. and the *William Tell* are about the only legitimate motivators to the program. An interview is playing and the record scratches terribly. Larry the J. turns down the volume, but the surface noise goes on. It's one of the unique features of the station, Larry tells the microphone, that the scratch remains when the record fades. "In fact," he says, "if WBAI's equipment didn't gurgle, pop, snap, and whine, lots of people wouldn't know we were on the air. This is WBAI bringing you boredom in the public interest." A station break is required by the FCC every half hour and Larry never plays it straight. The phone blinks; Larry picks it up, listens, grunts, and hangs up. "Killing me a shaggy dog story," he announces humorlessly. Lisa, a fifteen-year-old art student with a strep throat. One of Larry's regulars just checking in. Larry hangs about ten regulars, including one who invariably says, "There's some

hing very funny I think you ought to see in the *Times* on page . . .” and an incoherent fellow who after five minutes of prattling still has not reached the point of the story. Larry rarely puts the calls on the air immediately “because it’s so hard to screen out the clucks.” There is also an FCC rule against obscenity. Once, during a talk that Larry had with his microphone about whether obscenities are obscene if they are in a foreign language, he put on the air a caller who discussed the French word “con.” What? said Larry, whose French is shaky. “Con, con, you know, c-u —” Happily, Larry reached the switch just before the FCC had cause for complaint. But he’s not averse to flirting with possible disaster.

A call comes in which makes him laugh and laugh, and he sums it up over the air: “And he called me a mother-blanking Jew bastard and said I could insult blacks over the air because he had just insulted me.”

It’s nearing nine o’clock and the program’s end, and Larry is still scraping coagulated egg from the oil pie plate in which his breakfast arrived more than half an hour before. He has on one of his favorite records, a hypnotic litany urging at-chested women to develop their breasts. The phone rings and a girl says, “Would you please take that off, I’m up to Forty D already,” which Larry promptly relays to his listeners.

“You have been listening to stilla the Hun, sometimes known as Larry Josephson. This is WBAI, and another day has gone by that haven’t resigned on the air.” It is nine o’clock, but the announcer who is to change the records on the morning music program has not arrived. Larry says to his listeners, “I wish the announcer would get here on time . . . Whoever the announcer is, you’re fired.”

The announcer is, of course, not fired for being late, nor is Larry Josephson, who rarely arrives at 7 A.M. Sometimes he never arrives at all, and once he telephoned at 8:58, just in time to catch the arrival of the music program announcer, who, with WBAI’s habitual unpredictability, was early. Larry said over the phone, “I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry,” and that message went out over the air, followed by the deadpan announcement, “You have just heard *In the*

Beginning, with Larry Josephson.” No one seems to mind, for in less than the year that he has conducted his eclectic, erratic morning programs, Larry Josephson has attracted a faithful following of extremists of every persuasion and a satisfying number of intelligent people who prefer him to the *New York Times*.

The station management is satisfied too, in fact rather surprised that he had the program in him. Like a number of the twenty-odd underpaid employees at WBAI, Larry Josephson joined as a volunteer on the technical side because he felt he needed a hobby. Even today, he earns the major part of his living by programming computers that program other computers, although he considers this simply a trade. Larry has a theatrical agent, and there is every likelihood that he will not remain forever with WBAI. He freely admits that he is often bored with the program; sometimes up so tight that he snarls into the microphone between long moments of dead air, or tells his callers to “go to hell” or angrily “all right, so have a nervous breakdown. Leave me alone.” At other times, his rambling wit will have his listeners doubled up over their coffee cups.

He shares a resistance to the platitudes of commercial broadcasting with his colleagues at the station and with the Pacifica Foundation, of which WBAI is a part. Pacifica (so called not because it came into being on the West Coast, but by analogy with the word *pacific*) was founded in 1946 by Lewis Hill, an ex-White House man for a Washington, D.C., station. Hill came to California determined to set up a listener-supported radio station which bowed neither to sponsors nor to the tastes of a mass audience. He wanted not to compete with commercial stations but to complement their programming by offering a free forum for opinions of every persuasion, and the flexibility to continue commentaries and panel discussions until the ideas, not the stopwatch, dictated a logical ending. In 1949, KPFA went on the air from an office building in Berkeley. In 1959, KPFA began to operate from Los Angeles, and in 1960, a millionaire paper manufacturer named Louis Schweitzer gave Pacifica his commercial FM station in New York, WBAI.

Pacifica’s evolution has not been peaceful. In 1963 the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee investigated the foundation following “reports of possible Communist infiltration or penetration.” For thirteen months the FCC refused to renew the station’s licenses, and although it finally exonerated Pacifica from any skulduggery and renewed the licenses, Pacifica continues to be somewhat left of center in its views. One WBAI man, freely admitting this, did, however, suggest that free speech for the past few decades has largely been a left-wing hang-up. Except for the name he chose for the foundation, Lewis Hill never limited the ideological content of his ideal station. He did envision “some conscious flow of influences, some creative tension between broadcaster and audience that constantly reaffirms their mutual relevance. Listener sponsorship will require this mutual stimulus if it is to exist at all.”

Almost axiomatically, WBAI does not live up to this lofty principle every day. There are hours of non-stimulus; hours of belligerent or boring commentaries by Ethical Culturists, civil rights lawyers, associate professors of international relations. And there are hours of amateurishness: “We are now twenty-two minutes behind schedule.” “Certain parts of the tapes were damaged in processing. We apologize . . .” “We thought we had enough in the can” for the summer folk-music programs, “but we didn’t, and the producer was away so our hands were tied, our tongue was tied, and everything else was tied.”

The refreshing thing is the candor with which the management admits the station’s failings. “We can sometimes be as incompetent on tapes as on live broadcasts,” says Dale Minor, WBAI’s gaunt, harried program director. His sense of professionalism rebels at the thought of broadcasts always lagging beyond their appointed time. He is not happy with the cramped chaos at the studio which causes tapes to be damaged or lost, or with the economic bind that forces the station to erase some programs so that there is tape available to record others. He also admits that the freewheeling attitude of Pacifica toward the expression of the most divergent points of view, from Bircher to Communist, does tend to “attract unstable people who kind of come here and make a home

of the place. And at the same time it's probably worse for them than any other place because of the pressures." He remembers one assistant producer who, when evicted from his apartment several years ago, brought a cot down to East Thirty-ninth Street and began sleeping in his office. And although the New York Times played up the sabotaged transmitter and the abortive fire on East Thirty-ninth Street, suspecting that the perpetrator might be an irritated extremist of the far right or the far left, "one of our own nuts," as Dale Minor calls him, is being held on suspicion of arson.

On the other hand, WBAI's ideological flexibility allows for the kind of original programs that commercial networks would reject because they might offend sponsors or bore all but a tiny audience. The drama department can risk a four-and-a-half-hour adaptation of *The Trojan Horse*, Christopher Morley's novel, recorded by the station and presented on two successive evenings. The music department can present the Baroque Players of New York in a three-part series of rarities taped especially for WBAI, and the public affairs department can budget an hour and fifty minutes for an eyewitness report of the Battle of Danang in South Vietnam, perhaps

Programming at WBAI has always been offbeat, but not always so daring. When it first became a Pacifica station its program director, Eugene Bruck, devoted 50 to 60 percent of the air time to music, his special interest, for he felt that "music can be as informational as anything else." He played outstanding 78s that had never been transcribed to LPs. He had stereophonic broadcasts by arrangement with WRVR, a noncommercial (though not listener-supported) New York FM station. He carried live broadcasts from the Metropolitan Museum's concert series. He inaugurated a continuing tradition of broadcasting the entire *Ring of the Nibelungs* on Washington's Birthday. Brendan Behan spoke off the record "on such subjects as nationalism, homosexuality, the H-bomb, his Broadway play, *The Hostage*, Sean O'Casey, diet in the U.S., Samuel Beckett, James Joyce, Communism, and Brendan Behan." Allen Ginsberg appeared on the station, so did Ralph Ginzburg, Orson Bean, Celeste Holm, James Mason, Saul Bellow, Marianne Moore. You name them and they have probably aired their views over WBAI, without compensation, then as now. But Eugene Bruck worried about punctuality, the pronunciation of foreign

tion manager, received pledges for \$250 in ten minutes. Neither found anything remarkable in such a swift response. When WBAI stages a party in a West Side hotel, as it does four or five times a year, 500 people show up to dance and meet each other. A party usually nets the station at least \$1500.

This kind of instant listener response makes the station's staff believe it is worth putting in six hours a week for minuscule salaries and it justifies Frank Millsbaugh's vision of someday moving WBAI into a real brownstone in which there would be a theater and a coffee shop, wired for sound so that listeners could come to the station and participate in the programs. His ideal audience is not made up of people who say "Let's turn on the radio since we've nothing else to do." "We want the people who say, 'Let's listen to the radio because I want to do something interesting tonight.'"

Perhaps the chief reason there is such a lively relationship between audience and station is what one WBAI man calls "our stable kooks": Larry Josephson, the morning man, and Steve Post and Bob Fass, who close the station at night. Each is surrounded by a cult personality that would have doomed them to instant and everlasting Siberia in Khrushchev's Russia. But this is New York, and each has a fanatic following.

Steve Post, says one of his colleagues, "is the kind of little boy that when he is ill, listeners serve chicken soup." He came to the station as its unwilling bookkeeper and the accountants have apparently never quite recovered. Now he is chief announcer, but his cult gathers in force at their radios on weekends to listen to his open-ended Saturday and Sunday programs that begin at midnight. During the rest of the week, while Larry Josephson's listeners sleep peacefully, insomnia listeners listen to Bob Fass. For a thorough revealing demonstration of WBAI eclecticism there is no better way than to sit in on one of Bob Fass's shows—if you can find an empty chair. It's a kind of "creative tension" that Lewis Hill probably never dreamed of.

At 11:59 P.M. Bob Fass belts up the stairs and sweeps into the tiny studio where Larry Josephson began the day. He is well over a

To a Too Persistent Protégé

by Richard O'Connell

Pale Poetess

why pester with sound?

You are no Sappho

and I am no Pound.

last year's best program. It was recorded on the spot by Dale Minor, who spent more than half of 1966 in South Vietnam for all three Pacifica stations. The fact that the program was not put on the air until about a year after the event did nothing to lessen its impact. It is an unemotional descriptive commentary, minute by minute, death by death, setting straight a record that Dale Minor feels other reporters falsified. In the script an asterisk indicates gunfire, a double asterisk prolonged gunfire. The asterisks appear like coarsely ground pepper across the pages of the script. None of the firing was dubbed.

names, and "the regular, conservative republican listeners" who were his special pride.

Today, no one at the station can give you a profile of the listeners, except to say that there are about 13,000 who have paid \$15 (\$10 for students) to receive a monthly program listing called "The Folio." Paradoxically, the station management knows that it can reach its listeners by simply saying the word over the microphone. On a recent morning, Larry Josephson called for \$98 to complete matching a large donation. He raised over \$200 in fifteen minutes. On the previous evening, Frank Millsbaugh, the sta-

feet tall, a bit pudgy, balding in the front, but with lots of lank blond hair falling over the collar of his tawny turtleneck at the back. He wears thick horn-rims, a wedding ring, a necklace of what looks like wizened cherry pits, and off-white workman's pants — the kind with a loop for a hammer. When he shuffles LPs, ceaselessly looking for something he cannot find, the records look like greasy playing cards. A stout girl in a beret enters and says, "There are some people in the back room." Bob replies: "I'll talk to them. Send one of their number in."

At 12:40 A.M. there is a mess of thirty records on the console. A young man with a mustache and Levi's is pawing through an untidy bookcase full of tape reels, and Bob is whistling, puffing, and frantically shuffling through the records. He finds what he wants, cues up the three turntables and a tape machine, and mixes a cacophony that includes the recorded roar of a lion. He beckons through the glass partition to someone in the next room, and a swarthy, crew-cut man in new Levi's and a string tie made of tiny beads comes in and takes the last free chair. Bob is on the phone. To the caller he counts out eleven people on both sides of the glass partition, and says, "And that's too many, but if you really want to come up . . . I'm really sorry . . ." Then he tells the man with the mustache that he is in charge of the people in the back room: "You can tell them to go or shut up or whatever you want to." But Bob thinks better of it and lunges out of the studio to do the job himself.

When he returns, he begins to interview the man in the string tie, who turns out to be a member of the Rosebud tribe of the Sioux Nation, and who talks fluently and musically about the abysmal state of Indian civil rights. "I don't know if we'd want the country back today," he concludes. Then the Indian speaks of peyote and of yuwipi, the spirits whom the Rosebuds turn to with their problems. His tone wavers; his confidence is gone. He says that he's never taken peyote, but that the yuwipi are uncanny. Through the medicine men, he says, the spirits correctly predicted the number of votes he received each of the four times he was successfully elected president of the tribe.

The Indian takes his delegation

away about 2 A.M. because "we're pretty tired now." Not so a milling group of others in the studio and in the anteroom. A tiny young woman with solid legs and a grape-colored wool hat comes in and kisses Bob warmly. Linda, for that is the girl's name, sits down in the chair not yet cool from the Indian and begins twisting paper clips into pieces. She continues to do this throughout the interview when she is not smoking Kools or fiddling with rings on both her fourth fingers. She and Bob tell of their first contact — when Linda called him to say that the Visiting Mothers had no milk for the babies on Tenth Street. Linda organized the Visiting Mothers to care for homeless or indigent mothers and their children. She says that in August, when the call for milk went out over Bob's program, the Mothers almost floated away in the stuff. She repeats "you know" like a verbal tic, but her face lights up when she talks of the Mothers, and she finds a winning flow of words somewhere. The Mothers work a fifty- to sixty-hour week for \$40, she says. "Speaking of working for forty dollars a week, this is WBAI in New York." The station break is on the dot. Linda talks of "the happy chaos of Visiting Mothers," and Bob remarks that it is "a very tribal situation." The Mothers are supported by Paul Krassner, editor of *The Realist*. Linda says, "He's nice, he's good," but it turns out he is also asleep on the floor of the anteroom and can't be roused to come to the microphone. Bob tries to bring in "the big boom" in the anteroom so that other Mothers can tell their story, but there is only dead air. "Typically, the microphone is not connected," says Bob to his listeners, and dashes out to fix it.

It is 3:20 A.M. and the air conditioning is no longer able to compete with the crowd in the studio. It is close and very steamy. A handsome boy of about eleven, with long black hair and "Kill Christ" and "Ban the Bomb" buttons, wanders in and pledges \$1 to WBAI saying, "I'm all too happy to get this off my chest."

Paul Krassner has woken up, and he settles down at the microphone to sing in falsetto "Less Work for Mother," which he says he and his brother performed long ago on the *Horn & Hardart Children's Hour*. He has brought with him a red-haired

girl in a thick, woolly lamb coat. There are six people in the studio now. Krassner and Bob Fass shoot the breeze for a long time to an audience that must be shrinking by the minute, so incredibly in are the topics.

There is a talk of a recent *David Susskind Show* about hippies ("You and I, Bob, were not on the show because we are considered Establishment hippies," comments Krassner); of the Associated Press man who called Krassner after his death notice appeared as a joke in *Cheetah* and asked, "Is this God's honest truth?" when Krassner assured him that he was really alive; of a typo in the next morning's *Times* that had "fass media" for "mass media"; of the suggestive implications of "penal colony," "naval stores," and "windbreaker." Krassner suggests that the word hippie is just a label because "Einstein had long hair, and I have an uncle who's a judge who smokes pot."

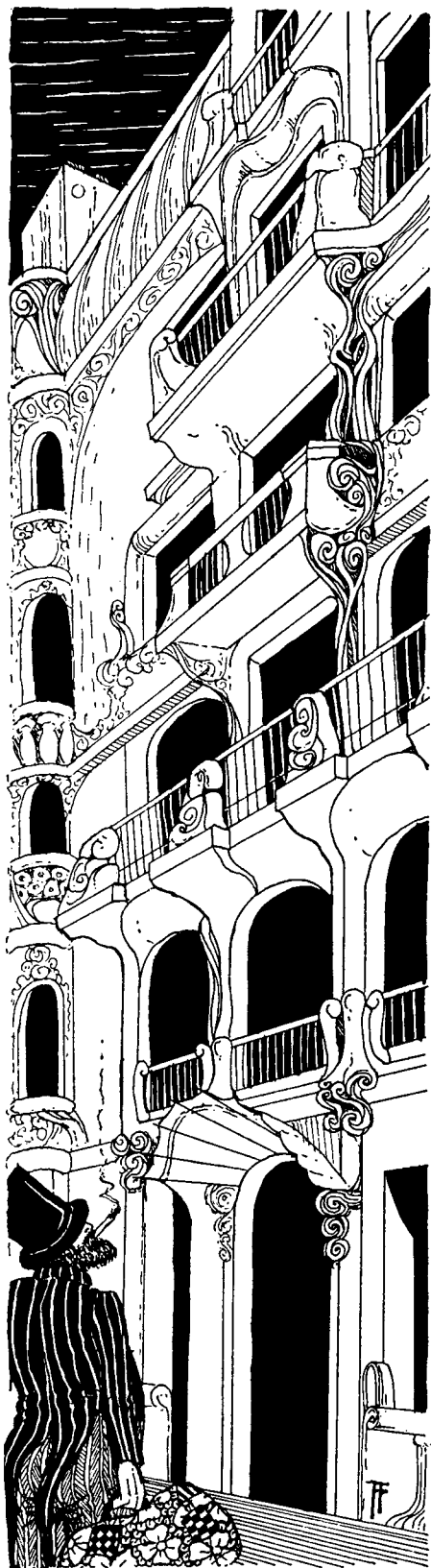
As records play over and under each other, Linda tells of her arrival this evening. "I'm here to blow up the building," said she to the cop on duty at the entrance. "Good," he replied flatly, "then I won't have to sit here any longer." It's getting very, very late. I look longingly at a large electric coffee pot on a shelf in the corner. On it is a sign: "This pot may give a slight electric shock, so watch out." The word "this" has been crossed out, but there is nothing going on inside the pot. I wish I had some coffee.

Krassner says, "Even though I have a daughter by my former marriage, my parents think I'm a virgin." Bob tries to sign off: "At this time WBAI concludes another day of scaring people." But there's a lot to be said before this actually happens. Krassner sings "bye, bye" in falsetto every time Bob draws breath during the FCC litany that Larry Josephson recited so many hours ago, and which he will recite again so soon. Krassner is replaced by a record of the same song that sounds so like his rendition that one suspects he recorded it on the *Horn & Hardart Children's Hour*. At 5:35 A.M. Bob Fass throws a switch and WBAI is off the air. The day is just beginning. There are nine survivors; the most lively is the little boy with long black hair.

places

Southern Hotels: *Vale et Salve*

by Joseph B. Cumming, Jr.



Atlanta has a spectacular new hotel, the Regency-Hyatt House. Another impressive, nineteen-story hotel is rising on the site of the old DeSota Hotel in Savannah, and a Statler-Hilton has been announced for downtown Macon, Georgia. The hotel, it seems, is staging a comeback, and the South is very much a part of it. The hint of a new era is enough to send a Southerner into a lingering look at the old one. At least it does this Southerner, who is admittedly newly in love with the Regency-Hyatt House.

Southern hotels have never received proper notice. They didn't fit the stereotype Southern landscape; never *looked* Southern. Most of the hotels built in the South since the Civil War were Victorian or Edwardian or Spanish Renaissance or neo-Romanesque, sprigged with towers and turrets, crystalline with filigree attributed to Stanford White. In that period there were hotels built to look like Moorish castles, Turkish mosques, Venetian doges' palaces, and Mediterranean villas. But none I know of reproduced the look of Jefferson's Monticello or Mount Vernon or "Twelve Oaks." Some of the elegant resort hotels and spas, such as the Monte Sano Hotel on a hill outside Huntsville, Alabama, did have deep porches and rows of rocking chairs, which made good sense in the South; but the prevailing tone in most resorts was strictly knickers and wicker, greensward and flagpoles, not string ties and bourbon and rebel y'all.

The Old South was never enthusiastic about hotels. Discounting a few like the original St. Charles in New Orleans, which opened in 1837 as "the gathering place of creole social leaders and dashing young officers," the prevailing attitude among the ruling class was that the idea of a hotel was a trifle unseemly. It smacked too much of commercial hospitality.

"When a gentleman comes to town," said Confederate statesman Robert Toombs, putting a stop to plans for building a hotel in his hometown of Washington, Georgia, "he will stay with me. If he is not a gentleman, then, most certainly, we do not want him to remain overnight."

The New South, on the other hand, was practically born in a hotel, in a smoke-filled lobby where legislators met Yankee entrepreneurs

(carpetbaggers to the Old South) and connived ways of rebuilding railroads destroyed by General William T. Sherman in his march through Georgia. Rebuild, expand, promote, develop, and get rich quick. In that era of progress and corruption a wheeler-dealer from Chicago named Hannibal I. Kimball moved to Atlanta, became the financial adviser to the governor, president of three Georgia railroad companies, and built a stately hotel in 1870 at "five-points," the heart of downtown Atlanta, which he named the Kimball House. He "was never able to convince many Georgians," wrote a historian later, "that he had not used the state's money doing it."

It was part of the forgotten spirit of the times that General Sherman was toasted at the old Kimball House when he visited Atlanta in 1878. It is also indicative that when the Kimball House burned down in 1883 it was rebuilt in less than two years, the new one gaudier than the first, with brickwork towers bulging out from the corners in a masterpiece of masonry. And once more politicians and promoters found each other in the cigar smoke, and together fashioned schemes both greedy and benevolent.

The town of Fitzgerald, Georgia, for example, was invented as a philanthropic railroad promotion. The town was built and settled by Civil War veterans from both sides of that conflict—an enterprise of reconciliation between former enemies. It worked. Streets were laid off and named for Yankee and Confederate generals. Georgians balked only at the naming of the new hotel the Grant-Lee; they insisted it be changed to Lee-Grant.

A look at the records of the building of these post-Civil War hotels tells a lot about the local hustle and the eagerness of foreign capital; it also reveals some of the problems and occasional languor of spirit. Take the Albert Hotel in Selma, Alabama. It took thirty-eight years to complete. The original architect, James E. Sweet of Albany, New York, was called home in April, 1861, at the outbreak of the Civil War. A year after the end of the war the half-finished structure stood, in the words of the local paper, "a reproach to the enterprise of our people." The next year enough of the building was completed to provide "eleven bed-

rooms, a bridal apartment, two parlors, and a skating rink" on the second floor, where a dining room had originally been conceived. But not until 1892 was it completed (the skating rink eliminated) and named after Albert G. Parrish, "who was active in procuring the money to purchase the property."

The Albert is the hotel designed after the palace of a Venetian doge, and it is also historic to reporters from all over the world as the hotel in whose lobby Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., was slugged as he made a symbolic registration. The last time I stayed there the Albert still had a deep-red carpet covering the lobby, fine old oak woodwork, a grand stairway that divided at the stained-glass-lit landing. The upper hallways had the same high ceilings of the last century and a sign: "These corridors are air cooled."

The South has always had numberless mineral springs with little inns and latticed pavilions that had been popular with the local leisure class since the 1820s. Their curative claims were as varied as the establishments — "marvelously useful in curing cutaneous disorders, also for removing freckles and tan from the skin, leaving the flesh as soft as a little child's," said a report on the waters at Cullman Springs, Alabama. The most fashionable with antebellum Southerners was White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, where in 1877 a charity ball was held to raise money for an equestrian statue of General Robert E. Lee.

But the South also had mild winters, "salubrious air" that was said to contain ozone — a superoxidized air with bracing and cleansing effects — in certain piny sections. And it had Florida. Well, it didn't really have Florida since that state has never been considered part of the South. And the newly minted millionaires who wintered in the exotic chain of hotels Henry M. Flagler built along his Florida East Coast Railway, and those of Henry B. Plant on the Gulf side of the state, had little to do with the natives beyond tipping the red-caps who handled their steamer trunks and the caddies who carried their clubs.

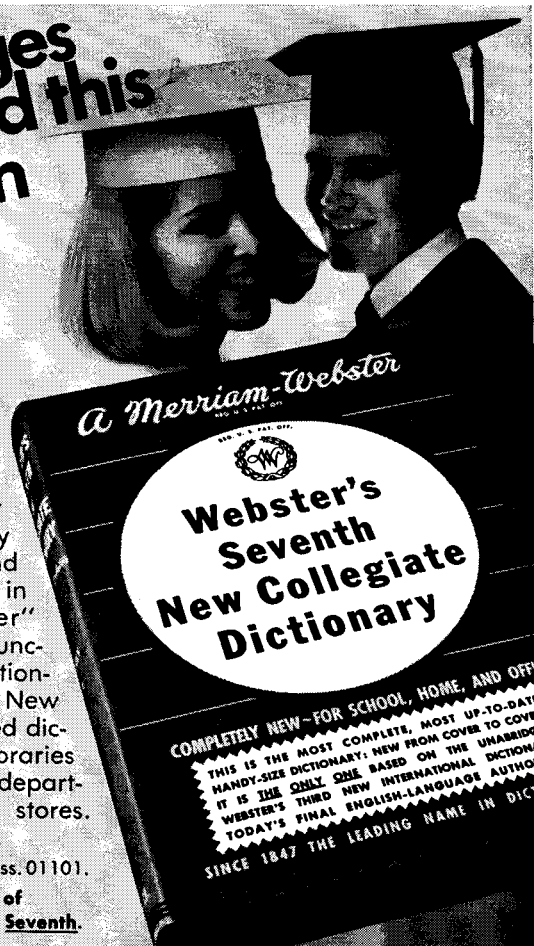
But in towns all across the South the local hotels did represent a meeting ground for provincial and outside views. The hotel was a social center for local people, often serving in the absence of a country club as a place

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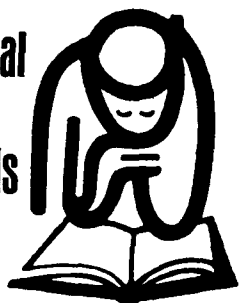
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Shapiro, Theodore
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WILLIAM TROY

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where the elite held their debut balls. Inevitably they would mingle in the lobby with the out-of-town guests.

In my hometown of Augusta a substantial winter colony grew from the annual visitors to the Bon Air Hotel. Ladies of my grandmother's generation served tea and cinnamon toast at the Cranford Club on winter afternoons. Mr. William Lyon Phelps, professor of English literature at Yale and a winter guest at the Bon Air for a quarter of a century, would be invited to come and read poetry.

"Visitors would get to be perfectly mad about getting in with local people," Mrs. Rodney S. Cohen, a grand dame of Augusta society, recalled. "There was always an interchange of magnificent parties — really magnificent parties — as fine as anywhere in the world. In the class with Newport."

The resort hotels began to die one Tuesday morning late in October,

1929. Many burned or went bankrupt, or both; some became VA hospitals, senior citizens' homes, or denominational colleges. One of them, Savannah's DeSota, departed this life with a rambunctious cork-popping costume ball and dinner party on New Year's Eve, 1965, exactly seventy-five years after the New Year's Eve party that celebrated its opening. Some died so slowly the only sound you could hear, as my grandfather said of the Bon Air in the 1930s, was "the clicking of knitting needles and the hardening of arteries."

What is left from that time in the Southern psyche may be no more than a faint, false memory of linen plus fours and a trim green grace. Certainly no Southerners became Yankeeized by so fleeting an exposure to well-heeled elegance. And the wealth that still bore telltale signs of being freshly acquired certainly never penetrated the Southern

Imagination

Near a 54-Q

by Stephen Dunn

The biggest
bra
I ever saw

was hanging
from
a skinny

line
to dry.

Stretched
out
it

was Amazonian;
the type

of artifact
anthropologists
find

and mistake
as
typical

of kind
and time.
Being civic

minded, I
decided
(for history's

sake) to
see if
I could

capture it,
the it
who

would
claim it
dry.

You will not
be (though I
was) surprised

the
claimant
was commensurate

in size
with her garment;
the biggest

woman
I ever saw
hung

me skinny
next to empty
elephant's

drawers.

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sense of longer rooted, superior gentility. Yet I cannot get away from the notion that, in some subliminal way, the encounter with Edwardian style on the golf course and at cocktail parties had its part in shaping the affinity certain city-dwelling, milkily affluent Southerners today have for thick tweeds, headmasters, and squash courts.

The purely commercial hotels lived on a while longer, falling into their own fly-buzzing silence with aging bellhops dozing in threadbare lobbies, bibulous old-timers reclining to the neck in deep leather chairs, slapping out the evening paper to the sports page. But the action had shifted to the edge-of-town motels, where Hertz and Avis car doors slammed richly shut at 7:30 in the morning as keen-edged salesmen got an early start on the day.

Once motels began to move into town, add meeting rooms and even ballrooms, solicit convention business, and shift their generic name to "motor hotel," there was little left for an old hotel. Except, it suddenly occurred, do exactly what a hotel is best at doing—the same job these downtown motor hotels were doing.

So today the fight is on. In Memphis the Sheraton chain bought out the historic old Peabody (all dying Southern hotels seem to be historic, usually because of the famous men who slept there; the Peabody because it figures in a famous definition of the mysterious Mississippi Delta—"It begins in the lobby of the Peabody Hotel in Memphis and ends on Catfish Row in Vicksburg"). In the hope of recapturing the growing convention business, Sheraton spent money adding Italian marble to the lobby, crystal chandeliers to the ballroom, and Louis Quinze and Seize furniture to the rooms. And they have continued the quaint afternoon ritual in which five ducks that swim in the pool in the lobby of the Peabody are escorted, to the tune of "Stars and Stripes Forever," by bellhops, over a special red carpet, to the elevator, where they are conveyed to their sleeping quarters in the penthouse.

Stars and Stripes may not be forever since the Downtown Motor Hotel is building a facility with a large convention hall just across the street from the Peabody.

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music

The Hunchback and the Ape by Herbert Kupferberg



When Dr. Samuel Johnson defined opera as "an exotic and irrational entertainment" he surely didn't have Hans Werner Henze and Alberto Ginastera in mind. Yet contemporary composers of opera are turning out products far more bizarre and unlikely than any the good doctor ever heard. Relatively far out artists are taking up opera in a big way, with the result that new life seems to have been infused into a form of music which was regarded not too long ago as hopelessly ailing. True, some people regard the cure as worse than the disease; nevertheless, operatic premieres are being held with increasing frequency these days, accompanied by a public anticipation and excitement that haven't existed for years.

Two recent cases in point are Henze's *Der Junge Lord* and Ginastera's *Bomarzo*. Both have been widely acclaimed, *The Young Lord* having entered the repertory of a number of European houses since its premiere in West Berlin in 1965, and *Bomarzo* having created a sensation in the only two cities where it has so far been given, Washington, D.C., in May, 1967, and in New York this past March. Both operas have just been released in complete recordings. Both are the works of composers who, when it suits their purposes, adapt such devices as the twelve-tone system, serialism, microtonality, aleatory, or chance, music to their own ends. Finally, both deal with spectacularly weird subjects. *The Young Lord* is a black comedy that has as its hero an ape. *Bomarzo's* central figure is a hunchbacked Renaissance prince who dabbles in black magic and lives amid hallucinations. It has been called a "topless" opera, and presumably because of its alleged eroticism, has been banned from its composer's native city, Buenos Aires.

In a way, *The Young Lord* is the more surprising of the two works simply because it marks a backward turn in the composer's style. Henze, who is forty-one, has written five symphonies, several stage works, and a prodigious number of other pieces, demonstrating a mastery of the most advanced musical idioms. Yet in *The Young Lord* he has deliberately abandoned atonal music because, he says, it does not "radiate cheerfulness" and is otherwise unsuited to comic opera. Henze's reversion has earned him the reproaches of avant-

gardists, who argue that both Verdi and Wagner used *their* most advanced techniques in their comic masterpieces, *Falstaff* and *Die Meistersinger*, and that Henze has sold out. Nevertheless, *Der Junge Lord* has achieved a good deal of popularity in Europe and may win a wider audience here through its excellent new recording (Deutsche Grammophon 139257/59: three records).

Despite its avoidance of the more extreme new techniques, *The Young Lord* is anything but an old-fashioned *bel canto* opera. Modernity is written all over it—in the pointillism of its scoring, the terseness of its melodies, its jagged dissonances, its explorations of the upper register.

Its ironic story, too, is of a decidedly modern turn. A British nobleman takes up residence in a fine house in a small German town in the nineteenth century. The townsfolk, especially the high society, are agog over their new resident and look forward to a round of parties, receptions, and visits. Sir Edgar, however, turns out to be a recluse, and to the outrage of the townspeople, invites no one to his home except a small, shabby circus troupe which plays in the village square. Finally, he surprises the sulking villagers by inviting them to a grand reception he is giving for his young nephew, Lord Barrat, just arrived from England. When the youth is presented to the guests they eagerly imitate his foibles, which include dancing wildly about the ballroom floor and smashing champagne glasses after draining them. When the party is at its peak Lord Barrat suddenly strips off his clothing, his wig, and his mask, and turns out to be the ape from the circus, who has been trained to imitate a human. He hops from one piece of furniture to another while the horrified guests cry "*Ein Aff, ein Aff*"—"An ape! An ape!" End of opera.

This curious plot gives Henze wide latitude for musical expression. There are dance rhythms, march rhythms, circus rhythms—one of them lifted boldly from Mozart's *Abduction From the Seraglio*. The music manages to be at once raucous and subtle, with Henze artfully depicting the pomposity and pretentiousness of the small-town society. The ensemble writing is delightful, with the whole town first turning out to welcome Sir Edgar, and then clustering about his house in indignation. There's



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brassy circus sequence and a vivid ballroom scene, with the music becoming increasingly garish as the final disaster approaches. Over all hangs the torment of the ape himself, whose anguished cries as he is being beaten in preparation for his new role pervade the climactic scenes. Only a pair of lovers emerge as rather wooden figures, with a love duet whose conventionality is downright distressing. Perhaps Henze is better at setting human foibles to music than feelings.

The recording, which is by the cast of the original production by the Deutsche Oper of Berlin, is first-rate. Although the work is sung in German, a good many of the leading singers are American, as is attested by such names as Loren Driscoll, who performs the role of the ape; Barry McDaniel, who sings the part of Sir Edgar's secretary (Sir Edgar himself is a mute role, and isn't heard in the recording); and Vera Little, who plays Begonia, a Creole serving girl with piquant memories of days in Jamaica. Libretto and translation are provided, along with an elaborate brochure containing color photographs of the stage production.

The plot of Ginastera's *Bomarzo* is even more bizarre, and its music is uncompromisingly exploratory throughout, going beyond his earlier *Don Rodrigo* in that respect. It is the work of a composer who has spent almost fifteen years experimenting with sonority and who, at the age of fifty-two, clearly intends to continue. Its spectrum of sound is astonishing. Dissonances abound; quarter tones produce strange and piercing colorations; sighs, moans, and mutterings, rather than words, are emitted by the chorus; percussive effects range from tinkling bells to dull thuds. These sounds are eminently suited to accompany a stage portraiture that includes grim skeleton dances; distorting mirrors that spring to life; astrological ceremonies; visions of devils and various monsters; and a good deal of orgiastic dancing.

Yet for all its range in tonal scope, *Bomarzo* provides its singers with plenty of strong vocal music, clear in line, lyric in feeling, expressive in nature. The work opens, after a dark, rumbling, edge-of-the-abyss kind of orchestral prelude, with a little pastoral song in which a shepherd announces that for all his poverty he would not change places

with the wealthy but hunchbacked Duke. Two hours later, after the Duke has been tormented to death physically, spiritually, and morally, the opera closes with the shepherd lad singing the same simple song. It is a masterful stroke.

As original as are many of Ginastera's concepts and methods, there are echoes of earlier composers, notably the Debussy of *Pelléas et Mélisande*. He is particularly resourceful in his use of the chorus, which produces some straightforward, intricately textured singing, but which also echoes the derisive or demonic cries of various personages in the action, and which in an orgy scene is called upon to provide some unmistakably amatory sounds.

With its vivid stage action and its extensive use of dance, *Bomarzo* is largely a visual opera. Yet the recording (CBS 32-31-0006: three records, with Spanish-English libretto) certainly conveys the dramatic strength and nightmarish quality of the work. It is performed by virtually the same cast that appeared at its world premiere in Washington and its recent performance by the New York City Opera Company under Julius Rudel: Salvador Novoa, tenor, as the Duke; Richard Torigi, baritone, as the astrologer; Isabel Penagos, soprano, as the Duke's wife; Joanna Simon, mezzo-soprano, as a courtesan who tries to reassure the Duke concerning his manhood; and Claramae Turner as Diana Orsini, the Duke's sympathetic grandmother — one of the most fully realized and beautifully sung roles in the recording.

Bomarzo has never been given in Argentina, being banned by the municipal authorities of Buenos Aires "because of its obsession with sex, violence, and hallucination," according to the official decree. Oddly, the novel from which the story is taken, by the Argentine poet Manuel Mujica Láinez, is freely sold in Buenos Aires and has won several literary prizes there. It will soon be published in an English translation.

Both Mujica Láinez and Ginastera came to New York in March to attend the rehearsals and performances of their work at the State Theater in Lincoln Center. Both gave lectures and demonstrations about *Bomarzo*; few operas in recent seasons have had musical circles so stirred up.

Mujica Láinez says he found his inspiration on a visit to Bomarzo,

near Viterbo in Italy, where an actual sixteenth-century duke built a garden full of grotesque stone monsters. To Ginastera, the story is a parable of modern man who, like the deformed Renaissance prince, is torn by his own doubts, fears, and subconscious instincts.

Ginastera, sober-looking, conservatively dressed, more of an Argentinian businessman than a composer in appearance, says he expects to go on writing even more advanced and adventurous music in the future. His third opera will be about another violent Italian family, the Cenci, which ought to provide subject suitable to the most extreme musical techniques.

Ginastera believes that atonalism is becoming a kind of *lingua franca* of music, obliterating the distinction between national styles — Italian, German, Russian, French — that marked nineteenth-century opera. "Distance is not measured in kilometers anymore, but in dollars," he said as we talked in his hotel room during an interval in the *Bomarzo* rehearsals. "The important thing is not how far a place is, but how much it costs to get there. Humanity is drawing closer together, and we are living in an epoch of constant change. Our music keeps changing too. As a composer I want to be more like Beethoven, who kept on changing his style throughout his life, than like Mozart, who did not. But it is a matter of changing gradually and out of spiritual necessity not just to be *à la mode*."

Whether Beethoven's achievement or Mozart's represents a greater challenge to composers of today remains a debatable proposition; so perhaps, does the contention that only atonalism offers a path toward the future. In Ginastera's case, spiritual necessity has produced a *Bomarzo*, in Henze's a *Junge Lord*. Both pertain to our own times, and both are flourishing on the operatic stage. For the moment, perhaps that is enough.

Record Reviews

Bach: Complete Organ Music, Volume 1
Lionel Rogg, organist; Epic B3C-166
three records

This is a fine example of the textual perversity of record manufacturers. The extensive liner notes of this album are replete with standard

information about the music being played, but not a word about the performer, the type of organ being used, or the place of origin. Such information happens to be highly pertinent, for the playing is of an extraordinary quality. In fact, this is one of the noblest and most sensitive Bach organ albums to have appeared in years, with sound that is room-flooding without being overpowering. Actually, Lionel Rogg is Swiss by nationality, and the organ sounds more modern than baroque. Since this is to be the first of a series (welcome news!), Epic will have an opportunity to tell us more of this superb organist and his instrument. Included in this album are such works as the Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor and the Toccata and Fugue in D Minor.

Britten: A Charm of Lullabies

Maureen Forrester, alto, with John Jewmark, pianist; Westminster WST-7137

One danger of a lullaby record is that it may well put a listener to sleep. This collection by Maureen Forrester does no such thing. In addition to the cycle of five Britten songs which provides the title, the record includes lullabies by a half dozen other composers, in French, Spanish, Italian, German, and English. All are sung with limpid freshness by the warm-voiced Miss Forrester. There's plenty of variety before she reaches the climactic and inevitable Brahms Lullaby, but a couple of unexpected delights are a French Languedoc doll song by one Théodat de Severac, and a charming berceuse by, of all people, Charles Ives. There are twenty-two songs altogether, and never a yawn among them.

Gay: The Beggar's Opera

Dir Malcolm Sargent conducting Elsie Morison and Monica Sinclair, sopranos; John Cameron, baritone; Owen Brannigan, bass; and actors of Old Vic Company; Seraphim SIB-6023: two records

When the London theater-owner John Rich put on John Gay's *Beggar's Opera* in 1728, the saying ran that the success of the work had made Gay rich and Rich gay. It has been providing at least gaiety ever since, and it continues to do so in this stimulating recording. The presence of an Old Vic speaking cast provides a ripe theatrical atmosphere, and the singers more

than match them in gusto. The saga of Polly Peachum and her MacHeath had a good deal of sharpness even in the pre-Brecht era, and its songs are tasty, if a bit repetitious. There's plenty of fun in this album, and some lusty, understandable English.

Strauss: Elektra

Georg Solti conducting Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, with Birgit Nilsson and Marie Collier, sopranos; Regina Resnik, mezzo-soprano; Gerhard Stolze, tenor; Tom Krause, bass; and others; London OSA-1269: two records

Birgit Nilsson's inability to achieve quite the same electrifying effect on records that she produces in the opera house remains a puzzlement. This recording has plenty of musical thrust and intensity, and a couple of harrowing screams at the right moments. Yet it remains only an approximation of what Miss Nilsson accomplishes when she sings the part of Agamemnon's daughter on the Metropolitan Opera stage. Regina Resnik is a stalwart Clytemnestra, and the London engineers pour on the sound. Yet the best advice remains for anyone wishing to experience the excitement of a Nilsson Elektra at the Met: buy a ticket.

Satie: Piano Music, Volume II

Aldo Ciccolini, pianist; Angel S-36459

The piano music of Erik Satie, brisk, brusque, and altogether bracing, occupies a world of its own, and Aldo Ciccolini inhabits it gracefully. The titles should suffice to give an idea of these comic, satiric, and derisive pieces — "The Eccentric Beauty," "Automatic Descriptions," "Veritable Flabby Preludes (for a Dog)," "Unpleasant Glimpses," and the like. Ciccolini has demonstrated his flair for such pieces with a previous record, and in this new collection his touch is as sure as ever. Chopin preludes they're not, but we all need a change of pace from time to time.

Portugal's Golden Age: Classical Music of the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries

Ruggiero Gerlin, harpsichord; Geraint Jones, organist; Gulbenkian Foundation Chamber Orchestra and Chorus; Mercury SR-4-9122: four records

This album lifts a curtain on a musical tradition hitherto largely unknown. The Gulbenkian Foundation of Portugal has sponsored re-

search into the country's musical past and come up with a fair amount of intriguing material. Especially noteworthy are several motets by one Pedro de Cristo, and a perky, prickly organ toccata by "Brother Jacinto," whoever he may have been. And a composer named Carlos Seixas, whose works run throughout the album, approaches major stature. A good share of the music is thoroughly conventional and uninspired, but some of these ancient Portuguese worthies wrote pieces that can freshen up a jaded musical palate.

An Evening of Elizabethan Verse and Its Music

W. H. Auden, reader, with Noah Greenberg conducting New York Pro Musica Antiqua; Odyssey 32-16-0171

Words and music have seldom been blended more fascinatingly than on this record, made in 1954, and now rereleased on the low-price Odyssey label. The British poet W. H. Auden reads poems by Ben Jonson, Thomas Campion, Edmund Spenser, and others, and each verse is followed by a musical setting exquisitely performed by the New York Pro Musica Antiqua. Most magnificent of all is a setting by Thomas Tomkins from the biblical Book of Samuel, "When David heard that Absalom was slain." Tomkins' intertwining musical lamentations on the words "Absalom, my son, my son" are unforgettably moving, and demonstrate that Elizabethan composers were as capable of intense musical expression as any who came after them.

The Godfrey Cambridge Show

Godfrey Cambridge, comedian; Epic FLS-15115

Godfrey Cambridge is a Negro comedian who uses a scalpel rather than a meat-ax to score his points on racial as well as other matters. In addition, when he's at his most serious he's also at his funniest. For example, a sequence in which he dolefully wonders why Negroes score so low in nonviolent crimes: embezzlement, tax evasion, art forgery, to name three. Now, *those* are crimes for which he'd like to see some racial equality, he says. Virtually all of the record is both shrewd and entertaining, its only drawback being the annoyingly hysterical live audience at the Las Vegas nightclub where the recording was made.

books

The Peripatetic Reviewer

by Edward Weeks



JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH has never lost much sleep over tradition. At Harvard his appointment was opposed on the ground that he had departed from what was known in the Yard as "Taussig Economics," as indeed he had when, with young economists here and in England, he saw the light generated by John Maynard Keynes. In Europe at the war's end he made himself quite unpopular with other members of the commission to assess the bomb damage by repeatedly questioning the claims of our precision bombers. Now in his short novel *THE TRIUMPH* (Houghton Mifflin, \$4.95) it is quickly apparent that he has less than reverence for the men and methods wherewith the State Department pursues its devious policy of foreign aid. That policy, so bounteously endorsed by John Foster Dulles in his day, proffers hardware and cash to any government pledged to be on our side and against Communism. Embarrassment arises when a Latin-American dictator who has used our gifts to feather his own nest is about to be dethroned by a Yale-educated liberal promising democratic reforms but bringing with him, in addition to the support of the military junta, some associates who may or may not have leanings toward Communism. This is the situation with which Galbraith opens *The Triumph*, and let me say at once that the novel is more authoritative and vastly more entertaining than Henry Adams' *Democracy*.

The country under review is the Central American republic of Puerto Santos, long ruled by the dictator Luis Martínez, who is as unscrupulous as they come. In his prime he was a woman-eater, preferably having a different one every afternoon; he was also profuse in adopting the suggestions that came down from the Good Neighbor: an experimental farm, new housing for the peons (begun but never finished), new boulevards (ditto), a dreadful non-functioning hotel for tourists. He even sent his son and heir to study at Ann Arbor. Such new business as ventured into Puerto Santos — cigarettes, Coca-Cola, the Latin-American edition of *Time* — he shared in. Now grown old and weary, Luis Martínez has been reduced to one mistress, but he is still demanding — "every time Pethwick has seen Martínez in the past two years it has cost us another \$5 mil-

lion," one official remarks, and this the way the State Department, represented by G. Worth Campbell the Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, would prefer to have it rather than risk an overthrow. It comes as no great surprise to Lu when his generals ease him out and on his way to Lisbon, but it is disagreeable shock to Pethwick, the American ambassador who has mollified his superiors in Washington with reassurance that Martínez would ride out the storm.

The improvisations of the new ruler, Miró (who must improvise since Martínez has cleaned out the treasury), the "watchful waiting" in Washington, the statecraft of the imperturbable Worth Campbell, the vague testimony before Congress and the anything but vague tactics of young Martínez when he makes his move from the University of Michigan Galbraith relates with a ironic relish which makes me laugh. The full-dress review in Worth Campbell's office is enlivened by such thinking as this from the representative of the Joint Staff that the "bombing was now designed not to keep the Communists out of the capital city but to keep them in. It would need to be combined, the recognized, with maximum emphasis on winning the hearts and minds of the people." Sure, these people many of them, are types and predictable, but what sets this novel apart from the fat cats we have had about our national Capital is Galbraith's irreverence, his cool wit and his perception of policy-making which only an insider could gibe at so effectually.

The scarlet cloak

It used to be said that no booby about Napoleon or Abraham Lincoln, even a mediocre one, could fail to find an audience. If Julius Caesar has a lower rating in hero worship it is because we know less about him and he is too distant for us to feel his warmth. The blanks in his career as much as the written record have given poetic license to Shakespeare, Shaw, and Wilder to dramatize the Caesar of their imagining; the protagonist in *THEODORE H. WHITE's* essay-melodrama *CAESAR AT THE RUBICON* (Atheneum, \$5.00) is more merciful than any other I have seen, though no less ambitious.

This is the story of the political

man who dwelt within the conqueror and who might ultimately have subdued the soldier had Rome given him the chance. In a lucid, knowledgeable prologue, Mr. White sets the stage: at the age of fifty-two and at the head of the most powerful army in the world, Caesar has paused at Ravenna, on the bank of the Rubicon, on his way home after nine years of fighting. His bloody triumphs in Gaul, against the Germanic tribes, and in Britain have leaned him; he no longer craves women; the tenderness in him shows in acts of unorthodox mercy toward his captives. For his veterans he wants land and the right to vote in the Assembly; for himself and his chief of staff, Titus Labienus, the chance to stand for the consulships when his command expires March 1. He has only one legion with him — the 13th — but a system of beacons he learned from the Gauls can alert or recall the army in a few days. So the three-act play begins.

But Rome, grown rich and corrupt with his spoils, is no longer for his bidding, and his Intelligence knows it: Antony and Balbus have come to tell Caesar that if he puts off his scarlet cloak and comes to Rome as a citizen, as the law decrees he must, the Senate will try him and pick him clean. When Caesar's appeals to Cato and Pompey are rejected, he is faced with the final choice of civil disobedience, and the risk of pitting legion against legion in civil war, or of surrendering himself to the mercy of his enemies. If he defies the Law, what will become of the Republic, and of the reforms which he had hoped to enforce? In his uncertainty he awaits a sign from the gods or a compromise from the Senate.

What we are asked to judge then is a play and the historical essay which precedes and completes it. I know from experience how compulsive a great actor can make a script, and I can imagine that if Paul Scofield were to play the part of Mr. White's Caesar, we would soon be under his spell. The action takes place in Caesar's headquarters with the trophies of his conquest on the walls; and with scenery by Oliver Smith and skillful lighting — lighting which will eventually reflect the beacons that call to arms — this would be a memorable forum for men in rage.

Were I a director the scene which

would trouble me most is the opening of Act Two when Caesar, thinking to placate the gods, impulsively decides to wash the feet of Vercingetorix, his prize captive. The huge blond prisoner is hobbled, with hands locked in a wooden bar, but not enough to prevent a tussle in which Caesar loses his robe and might have lost his life. This would be hard to play. The big scene is the explosion when Labienus realizes that Caesar has gone behind his back to alert the march on Rome. "I am not a fool behind whose back a little boy is sent to mobilize my legions on the Rhone," he thunders, and Caesar interrupts: "Not your legions, Labienus — Caesar's legions!"

The prose finds me where the play does not, and what Mr. White relates in the afterword, more poignant than anything in the play, is Caesar's isolation as he destroys his enemies and with them the Republic. Caesar may not have wished to be a god, as the author suggests, and when he donned the purple his decrees did gain him immortality but at the cost of liberty. This book, the May selection of the Literary Guild, springs from the political authority and the anxiety of the author at a time when the growth of executive power in our republic has been of increasing concern to us all.

Durrell's black humor

Seven years have elapsed since LAWRENCE DURRELL's last novel, and I had happily forgotten how hard he makes the reader work. He throws at your head characters with cockeyed names and little or no identification; words like "pogon," "konx," "parahelion," some of his own invention, some that can't be run down in Webster's; puns ("for better or for hearse," "Is there a life beyond the gravy?"); perversities; doggerel; dead bodies unaccounted for; and an assortment of compliant women each stranger than the last. In this maze the reader is expected to find his own way; some do and some give up. I made four different attempts to orient myself in TUNC (Dutton, \$6.95), and each time gave up in the neighborhood of page 80, in the midst of a long lecture, spoken at the Parthenon to some sophisticated Athenians by an architect named Caradoc. His remarks were

probably intended as a parody but, heaven knows, they are dull enough in themselves.

But on the fifth try I made it. I escaped from the Athenians, and in the more savory murk of Istanbul I at last began to fit the pieces together. The hero is a gifted, impecunious inventor, Felix Charlock. He has artificial diamonds and other salable projects in the back of his mind, but at the moment he is carrying about the equipment for a giant memory bank, a computer he calls Abel (for some time I thought Abel was a slave), an invention which has been spied on and greatly desired by Merlin, Ltd., an international holding company which for no good reason has a large office in Turkey. Felix has an undeniable way with him, and Merlin wants him in the firm; when he hesitates over signing the papers, the beautiful Benedicta, Merlin's daughter, is sent to complete the transaction.

Benedicta is alluring and so eccentric that she has to go to Switzerland for prolonged treatments. She has scads of money, which she spends in an imperious way that adds to Felix's infatuation. Despite his protests, she wills him half her fortune as part of the marriage contract; she is in short the bitch goddess, success. This is the story of the corruption of a pure scientist for commercial purposes, but the novelist warns us that Benedicta is an unwilling party to the plot. ("I only really loved you when I thought you were determined to be free from the firm." . . . "But," Felix retorts, "you made me sign on, Benedicta. It was you who insisted, remember?")

This Englishman can write like the best of them when he tries. His description of the Bosphorus at sunset is brilliant. His characterization of Shadbolt, one of the five solicitors of the firm, as he prepares the marriage contract, is a little gem: "A heavy-breathing slothful little man with plum-colored countenance, whose spectacles were attached to his lapel by a heavy black ribbon. When he put them on he did so reverently, as if he were in mourning, Voice of an old bugle full of spit." But he loves to show off, and since readers have encouraged him to do so for this long, why should he do otherwise? This novel from its leer- ing title to the close is too often the work of a lazy satyr.

Reader's Choice

by Oscar Handlin



Among the failings of United States foreign policy in the last half century was the tendency to formulate objectives in sweeping, universal terms. Partly, no doubt, because American statesmen had to justify their decisions to a democratic electorate, they were inclined to describe wars as crusades and to promise extraordinary redeeming results from every resort to arms. Since those promises could not be fulfilled, periods of painful disillusion alternated with those of extravagant hope.

It is therefore encouraging to observe a great change in this respect among American policy-makers. Whatever their other shortcomings might be, those charged with the conduct of our diplomacy in the past eight years have made no extravagant claims and conjured up no illusions. Their moderation reflects the awareness that the use of power has both limits and responsibilities.

GEORGE W. BALL in **THE DISCIPLINE OF POWER** (Atlantic-Little, Brown, \$7.50) illustrates the developing maturity of American views of foreign policy. Ball was Undersecretary of State for six critical years during the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations. His thoughtful analysis is a humane and realistic appraisal of the world today and of what it would take to develop a structure conducive to peace.

Ball's analysis is informed by a sense of the precariousness of life in the 1960s. He has been close enough to power to know how easily the Stone Age could return on the wings of science. The present differs

from the past in scale; everything is radically nearer, swifter, and more distinctive. Military and industrial force has become so massive that it can be effectively mobilized only in large units; and the states thus organized must learn to accept the discipline that their size and their strength impose on them. Yet Ball is also a realist who knows that no retreat to isolation is possible for the United States. The nation must therefore unceasingly reassess its situation to be sure that it can use its power and use it well.

Today's problems are the product of yesterday's successes. The containment policy of the post-war decades was static and defensive. But it kept us alive and checkmated Soviet power. We bought time on the assumption that the tides of history were with us, but now, Ball argues, it is necessary to move toward a more durable formula for easing world tensions.

He calls for modernization of the political structure of Europe. He sees the necessity of creating in Western Europe an entity that will be capable of mobilizing the resources of the Continent to serve its own resources. The European Coal and Steel Community and the Common Market were first steps. The men who planned those institutions anticipated that they would lead to closer political ties and ultimately to a European parliament. Ball desires the prompt implementation of that intention. To that end, it is desirable that Britain become a part of Europe. It has already set out on that course by surrendering the relics of its imperial past. It should, in addition, dissolve those elements of special relationships with the United States which in the past impeded adherence to the Common Market.

The unity of Europe would make possible a common effort to meet the needs of the Continent and would also permit it to play an appropriate part in world affairs. Only in this context will it be possible to approach a reunification of Germany which would neither threaten the Soviet Union nor be a danger to the neighbors of a revived Reich. The existence of a truly independent Europe would further the détente between the East and West; its developing trade with the U.S.S.R. would increase contacts and help dismantle the Iron Curtain. Europe

could also take a more forceful part in aid to the underdeveloped countries. United, it would be able to play a constructive role in areas like Africa with which it had historic connections.

Union would also be a help to the United States. Europe would then cease to be a subservient instrument of the cold war and become capable of entering as an equal into an Atlantic partnership. "Until Europe knows the reality of roughly equivalent power, Europeans will never risk the full acceptance of a partnership relation." Only when Europe as a whole is strong enough to protect its own interests will it make sense to build more comprehensive institutions for European-American cooperation.

Europe remains central to Ball's thinking, and properly so, because that is where the weight of military and industrial power outside the United States and the Soviet Union still lies. Yet Ball envisions a comparable pattern of adjustment in Asia. He would like to see Japan assume a much wider role, commensurate with its potential strength, and he hopes that new regional arrangements will relieve the United States of its present security obligations in that region. We need not "permanently maintain our presence in the Far East at anything like the present level. It is sound policy to encourage the Asian people to form regional groupings and to learn to work together for their common economic good."

Vietnam, in this perspective, seems almost incidental. It is true that Ball wrote before the Tet offensive and may therefore have exaggerated the degree of progress in pacification; and he certainly overestimated the value of the electronic barrier that was to have sealed off the northern frontier. But his comments still have relevance.

Ball was always against bombing the North and was an advocate of a moderate policy in Vietnam. He nevertheless understands the purpose of the American presence in Vietnam. "The lines enclosing Communist power were determined pragmatically by the play of force and counterforce, but now they have been sanctified by a whole series of security assurances of varying degrees of dignity." One of those lines ran across Vietnam, and the threat to it was a threat to the

whole system. As a result, simple withdrawal is impossible.

More important than the rehearsal of past mistakes is the ability to learn from them in order to avoid comparable errors in the future. Ball suggests more forethought and hesitation. Yet he is aware that every situation is complex, that no course is free of risks, and that hard choices are always necessary. He offers no easy formula for success, only a set of helpful guidelines for picking our way through the perils of the future.

Among the nations

S. Y. AGNON was scarcely known outside Israel when he won the 1966 Nobel Prize for Literature. In this case the award was not simply a token of recognition for the literature of a small nation; it went to a man of genuine genius whose merit was not widely perceived because few outside his country could read his writings.

A GUEST FOR THE NIGHT (Schocken Books, \$6.95) is the most important of Agnon's novels thus far to be made available in English. The translation is good, although it cannot convey the full flavor of the religious overtones of the original. The book does give outsiders an adequate basis for judging the merit of a writer who can be measured by the standards of world literature.

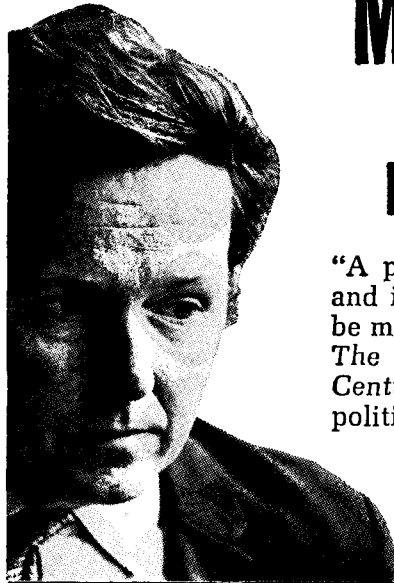
A Guest for the Night, which was originally written before World War II, is partly autobiographical, and it is rich in realistic detail. The precise and sympathetic portrayal of people and places vividly re-creates the world of Eastern European Jewry as it existed in the 1920s.

But the novel is more than a story. Agnon never escapes the awareness that there is a religious denotation to the word "writer" and thus to his profession; and he imparts almost a sacred quality to the language he uses. The result is a prose that is often lyrical and always deeply moving, as if the words were put into his mouth by God. In addition Agnon weaves into his narrative parables, dreams, legends, and stories that give full scope to the play of his imagination without diminishing the realism of the book as a whole. There is also a good deal of symbolism in the writing.

The plot itself has two levels of symbolic meaning. On the more

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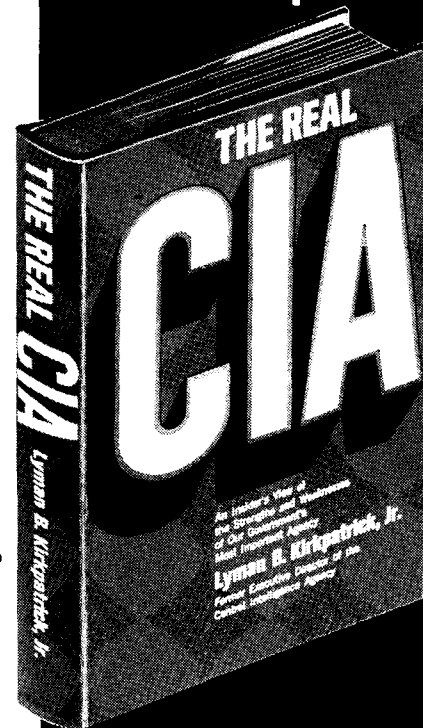
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literal level, the guest for the night is a man who comes back for a year from Palestine to the place of his birth in Poland. But the guest can also be understood as Israel, which passes fleetingly through the history of the nations. While the story has a particular setting, it also has a universal connotation.

The protagonist returns from the Holy Land to the village of his birth in Poland just after the disasters of World War I and of the pogroms which followed it. The survivors in Szibucz remain alive only to undergo fresh tribulations. Some of them migrate to America and "to other countries where even Adam never set foot." There they become like the mud of the street, which every passerby wipes off his boots. Among those who stay, faith has drained away. Like Daniel Bach, they are skeptics who no longer know the meaning of "the sanctities, the sanctity of life, and the sanctity of labor, and the sanctity of death," about which the teachers preach. Others engage in petty wrangling over the details of life.

The guest alone cares about the past of the town, and he therefore receives the key to the house of study in which are kept the books of traditional wisdom. When he loses the key, he has a new one made, for it is important to him to be able to resort to the place of study. There, as the days go by, he recalls his own childhood and unravels the characters of the people of the place. Toward the end he visits the old graveyard where are entombed the great men "who glorified our town with their learning and revealed its merits to the world."

All this he discovers has little meaning for most of the young people in the village. "Babtchi, the innkeeper's eldest child, has her hair cut like a boy's, wears a leather jacket, and is never without a cigarette in her mouth. She behaves like the young men, and not like the best but like the worst of them." Rachael, whose whole life was an exception, stands apart. But even she asks, "Why should I take on myself the burden of past generations? Let past generations look after themselves and my generation look after itself. Just as the generations before me lived in their own way, so my generation lives in its

own way." And she marries not the intended of her father's choice, but Yeruham Freeman, a road mender and a Communist.

When it comes time for the guest to depart, he bestows the key he had made upon the newly born son of Rachael and Yeruham. Agnosticism thereby expresses symbolically his compassion for the world Israel is about to quit. True, the old town and the old learning will never again become alive. The sojourner can only hope that the new society which will rise in the same place will learn to understand the tradition it once sheltered. Yet when the guest returns to Palestine, he discovers that the old key, which he thought he had lost, is still with him. Agnosticism thus expresses the hope that in the new land there will be a place for the old tradition.

The basic tone of the book is thus optimistic. It does not minimize the tragic quality of Jewish life in Eastern Europe. Nevertheless it voices the fervent belief that the presence of this guest among the nations will eventually be felt, both in the land which temporarily sheltered him and in that to which he ultimately returns.

The end of Europe

Since early in the nineteenth century Americans, like Englishmen, have been fascinated by the society and culture of Spain. That country seemed to mark the borderline beyond which European civilization failed to take hold. To Protestants, rationalists, and liberal democrats Spain seemed more alien than Italy or the Slavic East, partly no doubt because in the nineteenth century it seemed to reject the dominant economic forces that were transforming the rest of the continent. Here an earlier, more primitive — perhaps more authentic — style of life resisted industrialization and urbanization with all their monotony and uniformity.

JAMES A. MICHENER's first visit to Spain was as a boy when he shipped on a freighter that carried oranges to the marmalade factories of Scotland. He has traveled repeatedly through the country, and his book *IBERIA: SPANISH TRAVELS AND REFLECTIONS* (Random House \$10.00) sums up the observations of four decades. Yet it is more than a travelogue; it incorporates

the author's continuing search for the mystic or romantic aspects of life.

Iberia begins with a series of speculations. Why was Spain not altogether a part of Europe? Why in 1492 did it reverse the pattern of ethnic tolerance which had earlier been characteristic of its society? What accounts for its regionalism, for the inability to industrialize, for the role of the Church, and for the mystical strains that run through much of Spanish culture?

The book does not attempt to answer these questions systematically, although it draws together much relevant material. Michener describes a series of visits to Badajoz, Toledo, Córdoba, Seville, and other cities. In each, the observer's vision takes in both people and places; and he describes what he sees with sympathy. Tucked in among the anecdotes and the personal narratives are bits of history, discussions of art, music, and literature, and reactions to the natural landscape. Each place visited becomes a stimulus to elaborate but interesting digressions, on Seneca as a philosopher, on the flight of the storks and other birds in their migration to and from Africa, on publishing and popular literature, on rounds of festivals, and on politics. The book darts off into a biography of St. Theresa or of the lecherous Isabel II. It recounts the Don Juan legend and catalogues the paintings in the Prado. It is therefore neither coherent nor analytical. But it is infallingly interesting. Michener does not resolve the speculations with which he began. But he introduces the reader to a civilization which is not quite identical with his own.

Fates of three cities

VIÑA DELMAR'S *THE BECKER SCANDAL* (Harcourt, Brace & World, \$4.75) is an interesting evocation of a criminal case that rocked New York City in 1912. Herman Rosenthal, a fashionable gambler, charged Lieutenant Becker of the police vice squad with being first his partner and then his blackmailer. The lay before Rosenthal was to have testified before the Grand Jury, he was murdered. Lieutenant Becker was accused of the crime and ultimately convicted and executed. In the process the unsavory aspects of

New York life were uncovered, and District Attorney Whitman earned a reputation that took him to the governorship. The scandal rocked the whole city.

Viña Delmar tells the story as it intersected the life of her own family. Her actor father was one of Rosenthal's friends, raised in the same slum neighborhood. Her mother, aspiring to respectability, disliked the gambler and therefore refused to believe in Becker's guilt. The story, skillfully told as seen by an adolescent girl, blends the personal conflict of man and wife with the political ramifications of the murder and trial.

Somewhat less than a year after Rosenthal was shot, fourteen-year-old Mary Phagan was murdered in Atlanta. Leo Frank, the Jewish superintendent of the factory in which she worked, was tried and convicted of the crime. The anti-Semitism responsible for the verdict induced the governor to commute the sentence to life imprisonment, but shortly thereafter Frank was abducted from the jail and lynched.

LEONARD DINNERSTEIN'S *THE LEO FRANK CASE* (Columbia University Press, \$6.95) is a meticulous study of the incident, grounded upon a careful examination of the documents. It reveals the deficiencies of the judicial system, the effects of passion, and the corrupting results of violence. It also shows the connection between this case and the founding of the Ku Klux Klan shortly thereafter.

Two years before the Becker case broke, Tom Pendergast took control of the ward organization his brother had built in Kansas City. Tom extended the influence of the machine to the whole county, which he thereafter ruled for a quarter of a century. LYLE W. DORSETT in *THE PENDERGAST MACHINE* (Oxford University Press, \$6.00) gives us a competent history of the Pendergasts and of boss rule in the environment from which Harry Truman climbed to the presidency.

All three of these books treat the disorders of American urban life early in the twentieth century. Yet curiously, none of them says much about the cities themselves. Who were the 150,000 Atlantans who came gleefully to look at Frank's corpse? Who patronized Rosenthal's tables? Who filled the ranks of the Pendergast ward organization? Such questions still call for answers.



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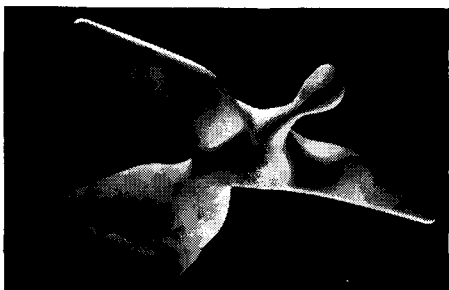
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"Whatever we do," ISAMU NOGUCHI observes in *A SCULPTOR'S WORLD* (Harper & Row, \$20.00), "we end up with ourselves, no better, no worse." This belief accounts, in an oblique way, for both the considerable merits and the exasperating omissions of Mr. Noguchi's venture into something resembling autobiography. It has not occurred to him that writing, an accretion of words building up meaning as a coral reef builds up from the sea bottom, is not the same process as knocking off chips of stone to reveal one of many possible shapes. Mr. Noguchi writes of action, tools, the working qualities of clay and granite, the differences between a piece which makes a hole in space and one which encloses space, one which sits on ground and one which floats in air. He seldom offers reasons other than availability or novelty for the choice of one material or objective over another, and makes no attempt to relate the events of his life to the remarkable variety of styles in which he has worked. As a history of work done and methods used, the book is unusual and highly interesting. One must be grateful for it, but it nags at the mind by raising questions that the author does not answer. Behind the abstraction and cool practicality of Mr. Noguchi's prose one detects, or seems to detect, the presence of a quite different person—a demonically energetic basher and hewer, a hotheaded experimenter, a man of odd history, wide travel, interesting acquaintance, and a certain gift for high-minded imbroglio. Mr. Noguchi refuses to introduce this fellow.

It is astonishing that any author should assume the possibility of arousing general interest in the history, recent changes, and current condition of a remote farming dis-

trict in Connecticut, and more astonishing that in *THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE* (Oxford University Press, \$5.00), CHRISTOPHER RAND has succeeded with the project.

There was a Laurel and Hardy film in which they tripped on a wintry mountain and became incorporated in a snowball which grew larger, faster, and funnier as it rolled and bounced down what was, to judge from the length of the trip, a moderate alp. When the snowball finally hit a tree and burst, it disgorged Laurel, Hardy, and an unforeseen but obviously disgruntled bear. This is the trick in GEORGE DEAUX's novel, *SUPERWORM* (Simon and Schuster, \$5.50). It starts out in a barbershop with a scene of such hilarious satirical lunacy that even while laughing one cringes from the inevitable letdown, for the author cannot possibly keep up this pace. So much for prophecy. He does keep it up. He even increases it by adding matters of sober public concern to what began as the slapstick nervous breakdown of a history professor. Professor Flowers, a nice man but mad, has assumed home-dyed black underwear and the title of Superworm and proposes to correct all the abominations of modern society. Flowers is improbable, to put it gently, but the abominations are real. Mr. Deaux has got a live and nasty bear wrapped up in that snowball, and its emergence brings a chill of belief. This is a very funny, very clever, savagely pessimistic book.

BABEL TO BYZANTIUM (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$5.95) assembles ten years of criticism by James Dickey, as shrewd, versatile, learned, and sympathetic a poet as ever discussed his art and his colleagues.

TOM STOPPARD, author of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, has written a first novel called *LORD MALQUIST & MR. MOON* (Knopf, \$4.95). He is quoted as maintaining that the book is not a fantasy because "everything in it is possible." It is true that bankrupt noblemen, homemade bombs, persons who believe themselves to be the Risen Christ, shooting unnoticed by the neighbors, and urban Europeans who dress up as cowpunchers are all individually

possible, but when the lot of the converge in a single book, the result looks too like fantasy to be considered anything else. The story told in a variety of styles, Pepysia Boswellian, Heyer Regency (pastiche of a pastiche—how far can the game go?), and Victorian romant being the most obvious. These tricks are held together by perfectly good modern prose and are used, with amusing ingenuity, to convey the visions that the principal characters see of themselves. The plot is merely the sad adventures of Mr. Moon, a gentle victim of a disorderly world. Since the background of the ruck seems to be Churchill's funeral, one is tempted to assume that Mr. Stoppard laments the passing of certain antique virtues, but the action and attendant symbolic decorations are so ambiguous that one may instead be celebrating the birth of some new freedom. This uncertainty does not matter much, for the interest of the book lies primarily in Mr. Stoppard's capacity for inventing unexpected but perverse logical episodes.

STEFAN THEMERSON'S *TOM HARR* (Knopf, \$5.95) is another meaningful fantasy. It starts out like a thriller, with a nameless narrator scrabbling together old clues and gossip about what may or may not have been a murder. After this promising beginning, the book drifts into philosophizing about life and society and personal identity and what is called the generation gap (one feels these words should all be capitalized) and a general portentiousness. All these matters finally arrive at stagnation rather than conclusion. It is disconcerting to start with Wilkie Collins and end with unfunny Nichols and May act.

Fearing that it may naturally attract only meditative vegetarians, I want to recommend *THE YOGI COOK BOOK* (Crown, \$3.50), by YOGI VITHALDAS and SUSAN ROBERT. It is full of delightful oddities and should beguile even entrenched cur haters.

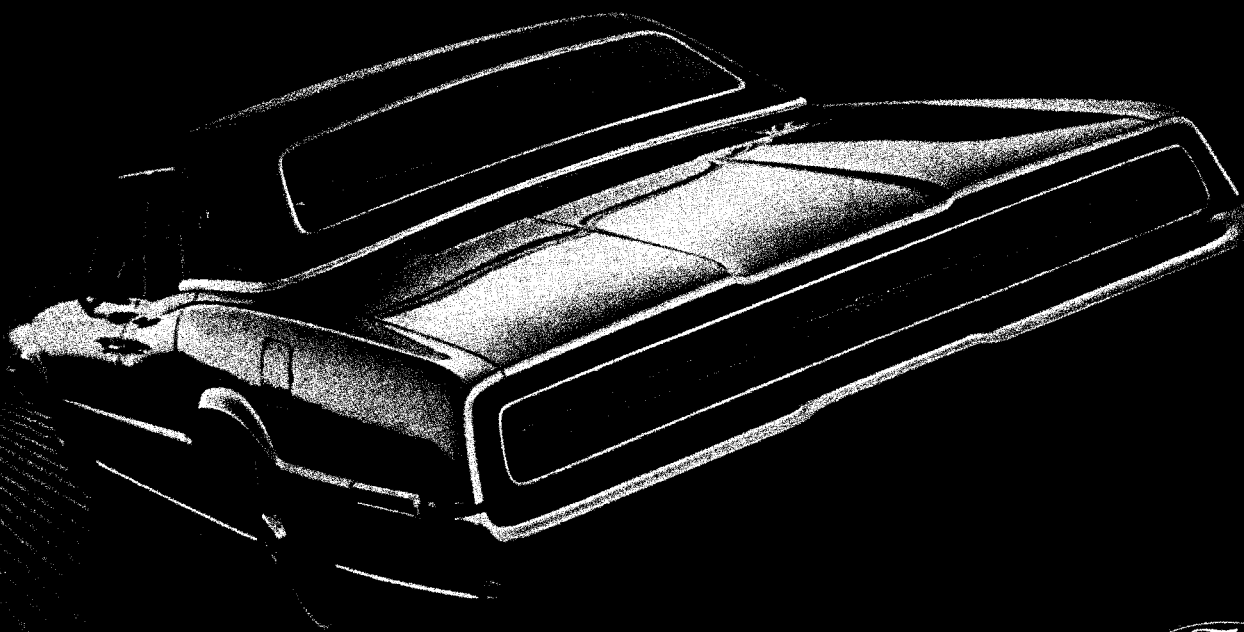
ONE FOR THE DEVIL (Houghton Mifflin, \$4.95) is a sequel to *Ser Days at the Silbersteins*, and like the earlier novel by ETIENNE LEROU it is a fantastic parable of social and religious decay, so intricately constructed that serious purpose disappears under rococo ornament.

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